

LIFE

# THE GRATEFUL DEAD

The Long Strange Trip of the World's Greatest Jam Band



A REISSUE OF  
LIFE'S SPECIAL EDITION

FOREWORD BY ROBERT HUNTER

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OENIX

MON POETS THEATER  
PHILIP WHALEN  
NEXT WEEK SEE YOU

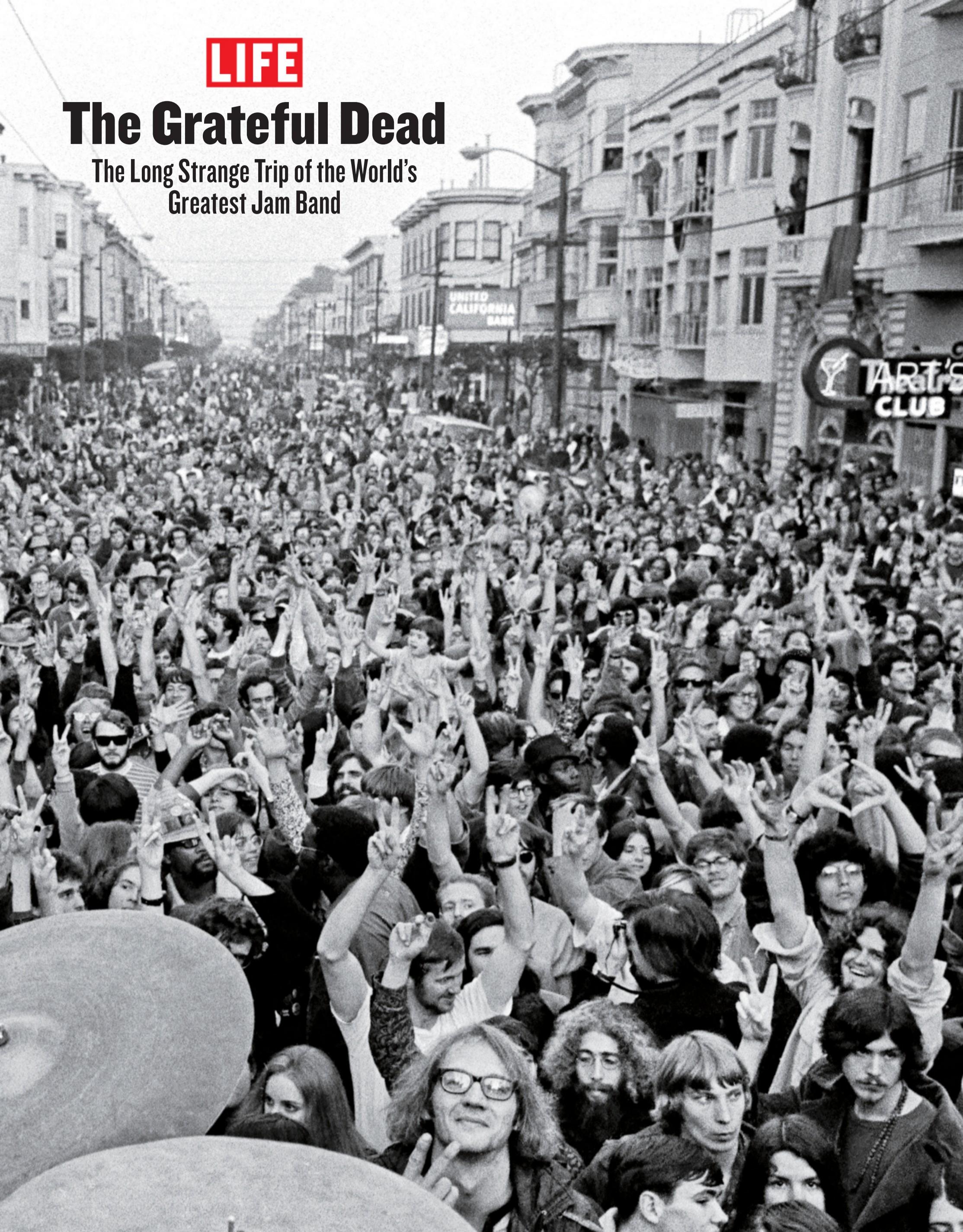
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LIFE

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The Long Strange Trip of the World's  
Greatest Jam Band



**LIFE**

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**FRONT COVER** Clockwise from left: Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir, Phil Lesh, Bill Kreutzmann, Mickey Hart and Brent Mydland in 1979.  
Photograph by Herb Greene.

**BACK COVER** In 1967, from left: Lesh, Garcia, Kreutzmann, Weir and Ron "Pigpen" McKernan.  
Photograph by Herb Greene.

**INSIDE COVER AND PAGE 1** Haight Street Grateful Dead free show, March 1968.  
Photograph © Jim Marshall Photography LLC.

**THESE PAGES** Standing at the corner of Haight and Ashbury streets in San Francisco, in 1967, from left: Jerry, Pigpen, Phil, Bob and Bill.  
Photograph by Herb Greene.

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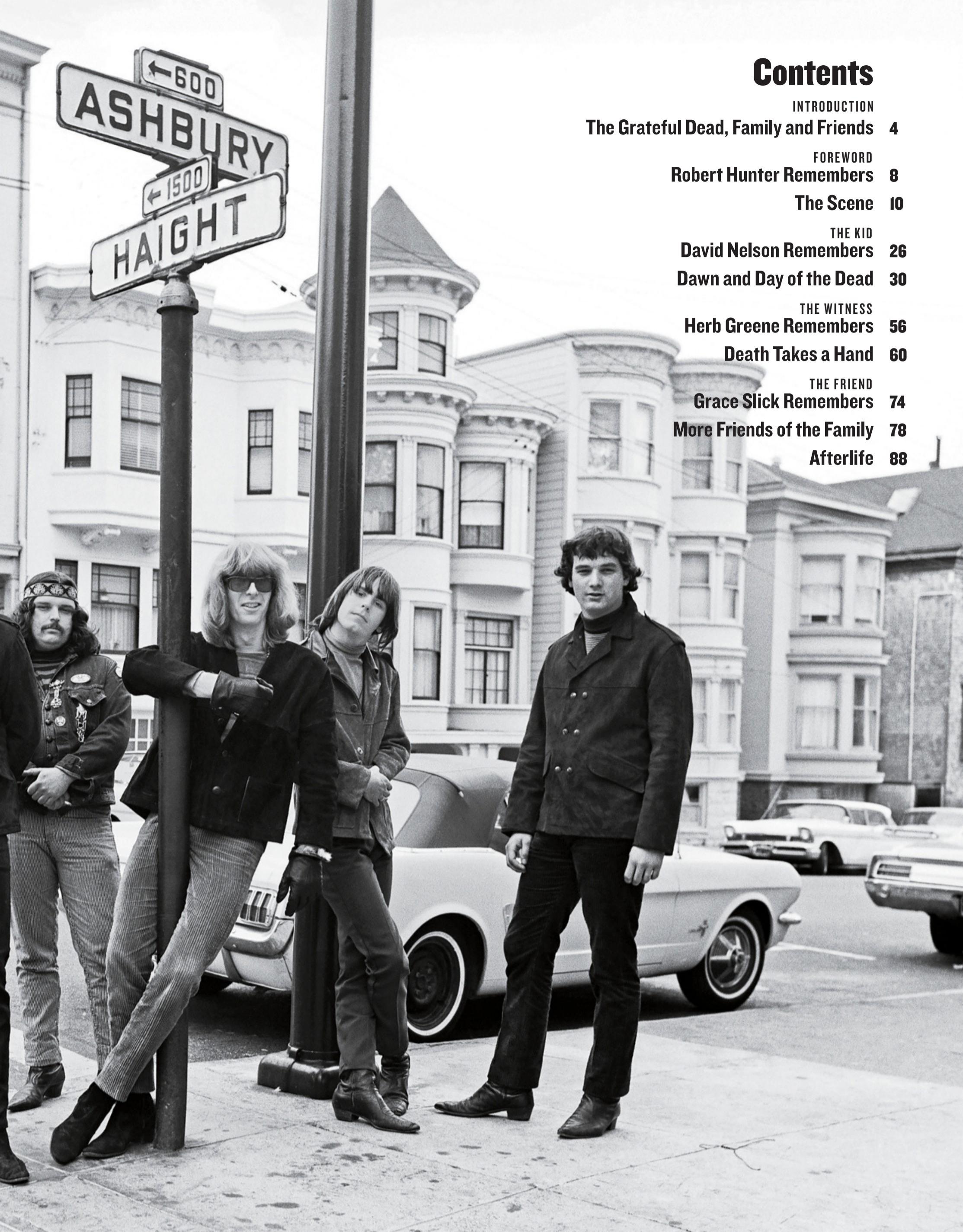
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## INTRODUCTION

# Not Fade Away

BY KOSTYA KENNEDY

**A**mong the recent interesting facts about the Grateful Dead—and in the nearly 55 years since the band began its quixotic, improbable and extravagantly unique existence there have been far too many interesting facts to enumerate—is that on April 13, 2019, the 12th annual Record Store Day in the United States, the band had the best-selling exclusive release in the country. Twenty-three years removed from their last performance, the Dead, with the issuing of an album that captures a pair of shows from 1980, beat out new releases from a range that included Prince, Green Day, Bob Dylan, Greta Van Fleet and dozens of others. Interesting, indeed, but not, on its face, surprising. Record Store Day, which caters to devotees of vinyl and CD albums, is an event for enthusiasts and aesthetes. And never ever, ever has a band ridden its tribe of enthusiasts and aesthetes to such heights as the Grateful Dead.

The group burst onto the '60s scene with a simple, blunt appeal suited to its time: trippy, danceable and intricately melodic music soaked in the peace-love-and-LSD ethos. That was plenty to get people on the bus. Yet it's the details and idiosyncrasies, namely, what songs from its rich and alluring catalog did the Dead unfurl when, where and how (and in what order!) that have helped sustain the band's extraordinary survival—for 30 years until the death of Jerry Garcia in 1995, and now for a brimming quarter-century afterlife. The Dead's primary offspring band, Dead & Company, had 19 dates on its summer 2019 tour ("It was an unforgettable night of music in Los Angeles," Bob Weir, 71, tweeted after blistering through a June show at the Hollywood Bowl), and recordings of the Grateful Dead's roughly 2,300 live performances are still listened to voraciously. The Dead are one of only six artists with a dedicated station on satellite radio, a medium indulged largely by affluent suburbanites. If you saw a Deadhead sticker on a Cadillac in the 1980s, you might see one on a Tesla today.

It wasn't just that the Dead, and the Dead pretty much alone, let fans record their concerts. The fact that they let you plug straight into the soundboard, or point a microphone from the crowd, front row, last row, anywhere in between, meant that you could, within limitations, make your own mix: A little more Jerry here, a little less drums

**TO KICK OFF THEIR 2016 TOUR,** Dead & Company show their fans some '60s-style love by staging a free concert at the Fillmore in San Francisco on May 23, left. "We only ask that you pay it forward, in some way, large or small," reads the announcement of the event. Tickets are snapped up online almost instantaneously, leaving many devotees empty handed, but in advance of the performance, the band stages a scavenger hunt

around the city, hiding handbills of the concert poster with the message "Your Miracle for Monday is an invitation to see Dead & Company at the Fillmore. This invitation is for you alone and cannot be transferred to another person." More tickets are distributed at the old Grateful Dead house, 710 Ashbury, where Bill Kreutzmann has stationed himself and hands out last-minute miracles to passersby.





JAMES R. ANDERSON

there. How much Weir? How much Phil? Even for the vast majority of Deadheads who weren't taping, the message was clear: We are giving you this music, this experience—it's yours.

That each night was unique, that you could attend 50 shows in a year or, more modestly, a few consecutive shows in the week the Dead swung through, and never see the same set, never hear the same song executed in the same way, was not a protracted stunt. It was the thing itself. Every night, the unexpected. At their peak the Grateful Dead played more than 125 gigs a year. Playing more than 80 in a year was common to the end. The band did 47 shows in their rickety final six months, the last performance exactly 30 days before Garcia, doomed by heroin addiction, died at 53—his life cut short but his legacy intact.

"What we really want to happen is, we want to be transformed from ordinary players into extraordinary ones, like forces of a larger consciousness," Garcia had said to *Rolling Stone* a few years before. "And the audience wants to be transformed from whatever ordinary reality they may be in to something a little wider, something that enlarges them. So maybe it's that notion of transformation, a seat-of-the-pants shamanism, that has something to do with why the Grateful Dead keep pulling them in. Maybe that's what keeps the audience coming back and what keeps it fascinating for us, too."

The feeling at Grateful Dead shows, of joining up with something "a little wider" naturally extended well beyond the stage, to the village-like environments that sprung up outside arenas and stadiums hours and days before the opening notes were played. Women in ankle-length tie-dye dresses holding I NEED A MIRACLE signs in search of a ticket to the show. Sunburned young men with matted hair looking to barter, say, a mushroom-avocado sandwich for a Hacky Sack. Someone strumming a guitar here, blowing a harmonica there. The scent of plant life in the air. Impressions of the Grateful Dead—skull logo, dancing bears—everywhere, including on a surveilling police car upon which a sticker has been surreptitiously stuck with the "Tennessee Jed" lyric "Ain't no place I'd rather be." Ironic, yes. And maybe true. As a police detective charged with handling big events in Eugene once said, "I'd rather work nine Grateful Dead concerts than one Oregon football game. They don't get belligerent like they do at the games."

According to setlist.fm, the Grateful Dead incorporated more than 520 songs, both originals and covers, into their live shows over the decades. The cover they played most often was "Not Fade Away," a rendition of the 1950s Buddy Holly song. The Dead would close their second set with it sometimes and in the later stages of the band's run that set-closer served as a cue: After the Dead walked off and the house lights dimmed, the audience would keep singing the song's chorus, "You know our love will not fade away." Then the five rhythmic claps, and then again "You know our love will not fade away." The crowd would do this for minutes on end, over and over, however long it took until Jerry and Bob and Phil and the rest of the Grateful Dead came back out to play a few more. ●

**THE DEAD SUPPORT THE TAPING**  
tradition, where concertgoers record  
concerts for other fans. They share  
the music for free, as bootlegging for  
profit is frowned on. At left is the  
taper and lawn section of the Pine  
Knob Music Theatre in Clarkston,  
Michigan on June 20, 1991.



## FOREWORD

# Robert Hunter Remembers

*As first meetings go, the one between Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter was not unlike “Ripple,” the Dead’s trippy live-and-let-live hippie anthem. It was 1961 in Palo Alto, at a production of the musical *Damn Yankees*. The future bandmates were introduced by an ex-girlfriend of Hunter’s who had moved on to dating Garcia. Things were a little awkward. But a couple of nights later, the two men hit it off at a party and formed a short-lived duo, Bob and Jerry. Later, when Hunter was living New Mexico writing songs, he decided to send a few off—including “St. Stephen” and “China Cat Sunflower”—to Garcia, who in turn invited his friend to join the Dead as a lyricist. Hunter’s poetic words helped shape the band; he was not only central to the Grateful Dead for years, he is one of the few songwriters to have collaborated with Bob Dylan. Today, Hunter performs only rarely.*

I’ve never seen a film nor read an article that successfully described the ’60s as I personally lived them. The music of the day can bring bits back momentarily, mental flashes of what I was doing when certain songs ruled radio—the sound of the music rather than the content of the lyrics. The Angels singing “My Boyfriend’s Back” between updates concerning Kennedy’s murder as I drove my delivery route through Berkeley, sidewalks filled with shocked faces ... or “Like a Rolling Stone” in ’65, when I was billeted for a week in a high school gym in Watts, my National Guard unit called up to contain the riots there—riding through town in a five-ton truck, top down with fixed bayonets ... the Fillmore Acid Test with the Grateful Dead strumming everybody’s DNA, photos of the time showing short-haired folks still in ’50s-style wear, standard ecstatic dress still to come.

In other words, I can’t speak accurately about that decade without citing my personal references. Otherwise, I can only regurgitate the usual ’60s stereotypes as do others, regardless of whether they were there or not—the same stereotypes provided, if not created, by hungry media-drawn crowds who found their way to the art community of Haight-Ashbury, young folks from across the country, true believers unprepared to feed or house themselves, reduced to panhandling, easy prey for the hard-drug concerns that destroyed the scene in short order.

One undeniable thing you can generalize about with the ’60s: Suddenly it was all happening at once! The escalation of the Vietnam War in ’65 served as a backdrop to peace and love, along with the Bloody Sunday violence of Selma and resulting momentous civil rights activism: the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Mario Savio and the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, the Black Panthers, beautiful Angela Davis on trial in San Jose, the burning of bras and draft cards.

**THE STAND-UP BASS IS A popular instrument in folk music circles in the early ’60s, and during a 1963 rehearsal at Stanford University, Robert Hunter (opposite) plays one. In**

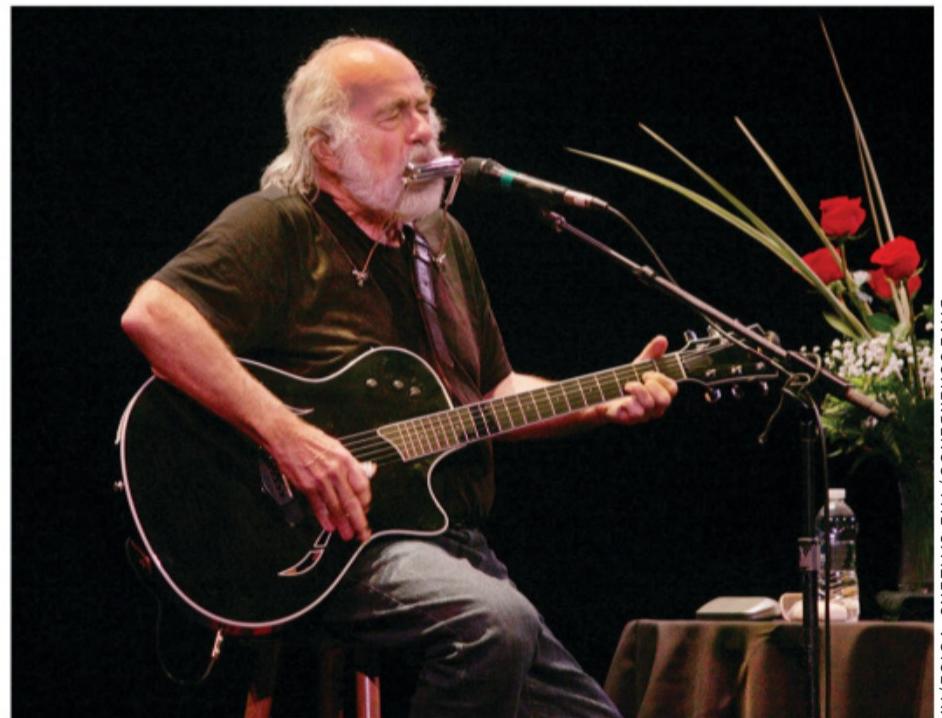
**this period, Hunter is regularly supporting his friend Jerry Garcia, who plays guitar and banjo and sings traditional tunes. Above: Known widely as the Grateful Dead’s longtime lyricist,**

All leading to California’s conservative backlash: the election of Ronald Reagan as governor.

Only brief, inspired words can convey scraps of the intensity of those times—words serving, perhaps, as captions to photographs by the likes of Herb Greene, which present somewhat satisfying moments from the time of ephemeral possibilities that were eventually dashed to pieces by the Powers That Be: business as usual and sovereign governmental lust for power and absolute control.

Knowing what we know now, even a time machine could never return us to the heart of those times since *mind-set* is 90 percent of what the ’60s were and must ever remain: attitudes born of innocence and fantasy, perhaps, yet resolutely hopeful.

If the ’60s failed to halt the rush to destruction, perhaps another decade yet will, given the melting-pot Internet and the *will* to do so.



DAVE SCHERBENCO/THE CITIZENS' VOICE/AP

**Hunter performs on occasion—above, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on July 30, 2014. His songs have been covered by Elvis Costello, Patti Smith, Los Lobos and many more.**



# The Scene

You might recall Blue Cheer, a heavy metal band. You probably don't remember the Mystery Trend or the Harbinger Complex. You certainly know of Quicksilver Messenger Service and the Steve Miller Band and Country Joe & the Fish and Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks. Historians among you know whereof we speak when we refer to the Great! Society and the Ace of Cups, the former of which featured the Slicks (Grace; her husband, Jerry; and Darby, Jerry's brother) and the latter of which was one of the first-ever all female American rock bands to be offered a recording deal. And then, of course, there were the Airplane, the Charlatans, Big Brother & the Holding Company... and the Grateful Dead.

There was no betting on the Dead early on. As Gene Sculatti, who managed the Bay Area band the Warlachs (not to be confused with the Warlocks) in 1965 and 1966, has written, "Many early S.F. hipsters looked down their granny glasses at the bands laboring in the sun-parched fields of San Jose and the Central Valley, the East Bay and Marin."

The Dead—the erstwhile Warlocks—were one of those bands, and in 1965 their membership comprised Jerry Garcia, Ron "Pigpen" McKernan, Bob Weir, Phil Lesh and Bill Kreutzmann. This quintet were Warlocks one day, then they were the Grateful Dead the next day—but the point is, they were part of the scene. Make that, the Scene.

As the veteran rock critic Ben Fong-Torres, who has lived there forever, has pointed out, there really wasn't a San Francisco sound. "I've never understood that tag," he writes. "Maybe it's just me, but I find it difficult to listen to Big Brother & the Holding Company's 'Down On Me,' Jefferson Airplane's 'It's No Secret,' and Country Joe & the Fish's 'Section 43' and make obvious musical connections between Big Brother's raw blues, the Airplane's folk-rock, and the Fish's acid visions." True enough, and Fong-Torres hasn't even gotten to the Dead yet, with that band's particular, distinctive, electrified version of Americana—a kind of acidified Stephen Foster.

There was no betting on any of these bands over all the others. If you were a Beatles fan, you might have placed a fiver on the Beau Brummels, since they looked so very Merseybeat. (There was also the Oxford Circle!) Or maybe a tenner on the Charlatans, also clean-cut. But let's agree with Fong-Torres: There was no San Francisco sound.

**AMERICA'S YOUTH NEEDED TO be in San Francisco in 1967, as the young woman opposite was, and as the Ohioans arriving in the Haight district (right) were. The Grateful Dead and many members of the slew of other bands were natives of the Bay Area, but the immigration of the youth was**

**pronounced:** It is estimated that as many as 100,000 kids made their way to the Bay Area—specifically to the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood—in '67. There they found all the music they could possibly listen to, all the drugs they could possibly ingest, about as much "free love" as they could

But there certainly was a San Francisco Scene.

It established itself subsequent to Beatlemania and the youthquake of the 1960s' midpoint. It was drug-fueled and unwashed, and would be emulated, in its essential orientation as a community, elsewhere in years to come (New York City's punk scene; Seattle's grunge scene). The San Francisco Scene was so distinctive and alluring that it had its own theme songs (wear those flowers in your hair) and, at the apex of the epoch, a signatory season (the Summer of Love).

It had its own 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, its 10 Downing Street: the corner of Haight Street and Ashbury Street, called by no less an arbiter than *Time* magazine, "The birthplace of America's counter-culture." Today, this San Francisco neighborhood is flush with well-kept and very expensive Victorian houses; it's the definition of desirable, upscale urban living these days. In 1967, the beleaguered speakers blared from within and all the windows were open. There was dancing in the streets.

The Grateful Dead would emerge from that milieu—that Scene—to become one of the biggest successes in American entertainment history.

You would have been bold—maybe crazy—to have placed that bet.



HERB GREENE

ever imagine and, for the thoughtful among them, vibrant art and political movements. Hippies was a term applied, and, as said, the counterculture was another. It wasn't a societal upheaval that was built to last, but in '67 in San Francisco, it looked like heaven.



**IN SAN FRANCISCO** in the mid to late 1960s, hippies attend an acid test (above). On the opposite page, top: Two of the test-givers, writer Ken Kesey, left, and Beat legend Neal Cassady, are on the bus, which is the storied Merry Pranksters' Day-Glo bus, which has unaccountably made it across the continent and is on this day in New York City. Some time later, the psychedelic school bus is unaccountably still operative in the summer of '69 and is

parked at the Woodstock Music and Arts Fair, where it attracts fans (and provides some relief from the near-constant rain). The Dead are at Woodstock, of course, but we're getting ahead of ourselves: What were the acid tests, who was Ken Kesey, who was Neal Cassady, and why is this all part of the story?

To start from the back end of those questions: This is part of the story because all these events and individuals blended

in the San Francisco stew that also had as ingredients Quicksilver, Big Brother, et alia—and the Dead.

Kesey was the author, most memorably, of the novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and he saw himself, as others did, as a bridge between the 1950s and '60s. Having been born in 1935 (he died in 2001), he once said in an interview, "I was too young to be a beatnik, and too old to be a hippie."



PAUL RYAN/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY



DAVID GAHR/PREMIUM/GETTY



JOHN DOMINIS/LIFE/THE PICTURE COLLECTION

Cassady, who had become an immortal Beat as the Dean Moriarty character in his friend Jack Kerouac's seminal novel *On the Road*, befriended Kesey, and helped build the bridge.

The acid tests, as briefly alluded to by Bob Hunter in our foreword, started out as more than semiofficial. They were part of a CIA study—the secret Project MKUltra—to study the use of psychotropic drugs such as LSD and others. Kesey, working

as a night aide at the veterans' hospital in Menlo Park, raised his hand as a volunteer and subsequently wrote official reports about his experiences under the influence. He used those experiences as grist in his famous novel and proselytized among his susceptible friends about how cool all this was.

So the seeds were sown in greater San Francisco—in fact, at Palo Alto's august Stanford University, where the acid

tests were housed. The CIA did not call their operations "acid tests," of course, but Kesey called his parties in La Honda precisely that. The parties featured drugs as a centerpiece and also strobe lights, fluorescently painted walls and Kesey's favorite band, the Warlocks: the Warlocks, who were soon to be the Dead.

So there you have it, a perfectly direct and sane lineage.

Right?



**THERE WERE ACID TESTS** and there were "Human Be-Ins," including the one above fronted by Beat poet and Kerouac and Cassady confrere Allen Ginsberg, characteristically bearded and wearing white and flanked (from left) by poets Gary Snyder and Michael McClure and Ginsberg's then girlfriend (!) Maretta

Greer, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park in 1967. Opposite: A period poster, whose psychedelic attitude has not gone out of style today when referencing either the Bay Area of the time or the Grateful Dead (which is misspelled).

Ginsberg (1926–1997) had befriended Kerouac and Cassady in New York City

when he and Kerouac were at Columbia University; he would later travel with Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue, pushing his beatific, Buddhist-based view of transcendence further onward. These non-rockers were bringing something to the movement—to the Scene—while not laying down actual tracks beyond



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GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS/GETTY

the spoken word. In 1956, Ginsberg, a New Jersey native, had been hanging out in San Francisco's North Beach district, and the local (now legendary) City Lights bookstore had published his epic, now classic, poem "Howl," which became a sacred tract for many who were, by night, going to the clubs to listen to the bands.



ROBERT W. KLEIN/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

**THOROUGHLY REPRESENTATIVE** of the Summer of Love, the woman above is Judy Smith, sporting face paint and flowers in her hair. She is all smiles as she and others congregate in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco on June 21, 1967. Everywhere in this special if peculiar season, music (right) and cannabis are in the Bay Area air.

The societal value of the cultural contributions of the 1960s counterculture were debated at the time and have been debated since, but they were what they were, and in San Francisco they were at their most law-breaking, peaceful and—if you were in favor—appealing.

The authorities said they would get involved, what with all these drug-taking kids flooding into the Haight-Ashbury

district. But they didn't, not really (to the consternation of some locals, it should be said). The local issue became, because of its strange and interesting nature, a national one, and soon the Summer of Love was being proclaimed as such by LIFE and Time and other magazines. In the *New York Times Magazine*, Hunter S. Thompson, who was not unsympathetic, dubbed the place "Hashbury." The kids partied on, most of them ambivalent.

In June 1967, there was the Fantasy Fair and Magic Mountain Music Festival in Marin County and also the Monterey Pop Festival, which drew as many as 60,000. The movement now had its evangelists who could take the message beyond San Francisco: these singers, these bands.



HERB GREENE

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HERB GREENE



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## THE FIRST BAND TO BREAK BIG

out of the San Francisco music scene was the Jefferson Airplane. In considering how this might have come about, we look to rock journalist Ben Fong-Torres, who knew the scene and its players. After discussing the influential folk and psychedelic rock band the Charlisans, he writes: "The Great! Society weren't much better. Their lead singer, Grace Slick, was

a model who saw the Jefferson Airplane play and thought that'd be more fun than walking the runway. Guitarist Darby Slick, Grace's brother-in-law, recalled how he felt before an audition for the Family Dog. 'I was nervous . . . We knew the songs; the problem was, we didn't know how to play.' Meantime, Grace insisted she was no singer ('I'm just loud,' she'd say), although she became a capable, even arresting,

vocalist with the Airplane and composed one of two of their greatest hits, 'White Rabbit.' (The other, 'Somebody to Love,' was by Darby Slick, who shrugged it off: 'I'd broken up with a girl around then, and one night I took some LSD . . .')"

Such were the rough-hewn apprenticeship months of the San Francisco bands, none of which were the Beatles or the Stones or the Yardbirds



even as their songs began to leapfrog up the charts. Opposite, top, we have Grace not with the Airplane but with the Great! Society. The exclamation point needs a "sic": It's a play on President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" war on poverty, which, it is supposed, many of the liberal band members would have subscribed to, had they thought about it. They probably regret the irony today.

Opposite, bottom, is Grace, waiting in line at the Fillmore Auditorium on the evening she joins the Airplane in late 1966 as a new singer, replacing Signe Toly Anderson, who had departed the band the previous night to be with her new child. Above is the reconstituted Airplane that would take flight in 1967: (from left) Grace, Spencer Dryden, Jack Casady, Marty Balin, Paul Kantner and Jorma Kaukonen.



**DAYS OF INNOCENCE** for these hopeful bands were upended by two entities: drugs, which wreaked havoc on bodies and minds, and record companies, which promised a future for some but not others. Above: Two singers who died far too young, both at age 27, were Janis Joplin, left, and her longtime friend (and short-time boyfriend) Ron "Pigpen" McKernan. In 1967, Janis, fronting Big Brother & the Holding Company, and McKernan, with the Grateful Dead, were

just two of the local heroes who starred at the Monterey Pop Festival. Other big names included England's the Who and the Animals, L.A.'s the Byrds, soulman Otis Redding, and Jimi Hendrix.

Opposite, top: In the year of Monterey, the acid-rockers Quicksilver Messenger Service. Middle: New Riders of the Purple Sage, in 1970, with David Nelson tipping his hat (please see page 26). Bottom: The Charlatics, left, and Country Joe & the Fish, right.





**YOU HAD TO BE THERE**, at the Fillmore Auditorium in July of 1966, when the Jefferson Airplane (seen at left) and the Grateful Dead shared the bill. Pigpen's onstage here (at right in a vest, next to Marty Balin), and kicking out the jams is none other than Joan Baez (yes, that's her, in the white shirt in the two lower shots, dancing in a decidedly non-folkie fashion) and Baez's sister, the singer Mimi Fariña. At the time, the female balladeers were lending the San Francisco bands a bit of cachet.

Opposite, top: In 1967 at the same venue, a pack of fans, testifying to the growing popularity of the San Francisco psychedelic sound in general, and the Grateful Dead in particular, wait for a show to begin. Bottom: Same year, same place, the Dead—left to right, organist and vocalist Ron “Pigpen” McKernan, lead guitarist and vocalist Jerry Garcia, bassist Phil Lesh, drummer Bill Kreutzmann and rhythm guitarist and vocalist Bob Weir—perform.

Years later Weir said kindly of that Summer of Love: “Haight-Ashbury was a ghetto of bohemians who wanted to do anything—and we did, but I don’t think it has happened since. Yes there was LSD. But Haight-Ashbury was not about drugs. It was about exploration, finding new ways of expression, being aware of one’s existence.”

If it was indeed a brief moment in time and hasn’t happened since, Weir and his bandmates would move on, survive fully intact for a while—and continue to ascend. As we will learn in the following chapter, the Dead’s path was sometimes planned and sometimes accidental; it was always paved by the fans, by the Deadheads who would become, first, a clique, then a community, then a country—a nation. Long ago, the Dead started putting out music that would please such people: the jams, the ever changing playlist at live shows whose sound and energy were more than could be captured on any album recorded in a studio.

They were the most elusive, most untraditional, most rebellious of bands. While their neighbors in Jefferson Airplane and Big Brother were going Top 10 with three-minute 45s, the Dead had no hits on the charts. Now-classic songs from *American Beauty* and *Workingman’s Dead*, not to mention from the first album, went nowhere, except into the hearts of early Deadheads.

But the band hung in there and continued to make music that pleased them all—none more than Jerry, who demurred at being seen as the “leader” (but who was he kidding?). Someone, maybe all of them, sensed that what was beginning to happen with the Dead was a democracy. Everyone got to vote. And if Jerry was elected president, so be it.





**IN 1967, PHOTOGRAPHER** Jim

Marshall invited the big five San Francisco psychedelic and folk rock bands to the Grateful Dead's house at 710 Ashbury Street: Quicksilver Messenger Service, the Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin with Big Brother & the Holding Company, Jefferson Airplane and the Charlatans. From there, the musicians marched down to the Panhandle of Golden Gate Park to take

this picture. The rockers posed mostly, but not 100 percent, with their own band mates. At the far left, standing and seated, are Quicksilver Messenger Service, whose debut album wouldn't hit stores until the following year. Next to them is a grouping of the Grateful Dead, including drummer Bill Kreutzmann, fourth from left; Pigpen, in the red scarf, with Jerry Garcia at his left; Bob Weir, seated, with closed eyes,

next to Phil Lesh in a multicolored top. To Jerry's left, in the hat and fringed shawl, is Janis Joplin, who apparently strayed from her bandmates and inserted herself alongside the Jefferson Airplane. At far right are the Charlatans, dressed in their trademark late-19th-century duds. The group recorded only one album, but it is often cited as paving the way for the San Francisco sound.







# THE KID David Nelson Remembers

*When David Nelson was a boy growing up on the San Francisco Peninsula in the 1940s and '50s, larger heroes for him than, say, Willie Mays were the guitar- and banjo-picking folkies who were keeping alive a different national pastime. One of his idols became a friend and bandmate, and in a conversation with LIFE Books, he recalls meeting Jerry.*

“I grew up on the Peninsula in a white suburban community where you really had to dig for this music—old American folk music—that I avidly loved,” says Nelson, who is 76 and still lives in northern California, in the Mendocino County town of Ukiah. “But we had Berkeley, and I’d get on a bus and come back from Berkeley with piles and piles of records: Stanley Brothers, Bill Monroe.

“I really wanted a guitar and my parents got me a pedal steel. What was this? It was lying down flat.” If he masked his disappointment from his folks, he nonetheless wanted to get his fingers on the frets of what he thought of as the real deal: a conventional acoustic guitar.

“I was friends with Peter Albin,” he says of the boy who would later cofound the San Francisco band Big Brother & the Holding Company (and who himself reminisces in this book, on page 80). “Peter was a year younger than me and went to the same high school—we were in art class together. One day he said, ‘My older brother just went to Mexico and got a guitar. Come over and play.’”

Nelson didn’t have to be asked twice. The brother was Rodney Albin, who died of stomach cancer in 1984 but who, earlier, had become a mover and shaker in the Peninsula folk scene. Rodney is warmly appreciated by Christopher Newton in his online Pondering Pig blog, which regularly offers stories of the old days: “Rodney masterminded the folk music festival at the College of San Mateo where young Jerry Garcia made his debut to an unappreciative audience of frat rats. Rodney and George ‘The Beast’ Howell had opened the Boar’s Head the preceding summer, a folk-oriented coffeehouse in the loft above the bookstore in San Carlos where George worked. Garcia and the other Palo Alto folkniks regularly showed up there to jam into the weekend nights . . . [Rodney] used the tape machine to record performances at the Boar’s Head. Apparently some

of these tapes still exist and are passed from hand to hand in Deadhead circles. They would include: Garcia, Ron McKernan, David Nelson, Rodney’s brother Peter, of course, and other less talented performers who went on to become teachers and bureaucrats and accountants . . .”

Nelson vividly recalls his first sessions with the Albin brothers, and then the meeting with Jerry. “It was the summer of ’61,” he says. “I was still a teenager. Rodney showed me the chords, and that summer we played some music, the Albins and me, at a bookstore in San Carlos. We’d lay a bookcase down on the floor for a stage, put a rug on it.

“Rodney said, ‘I’m gonna take you down to Kepler’s in Menlo Park.’ Rodney had his license. ‘Nelson, bring your banjo.’

“So in ’61, Rodney took us to Kepler’s bookstore, which had music and was also a hangout for bikers and others. Peter and I were peeking through the books and there’s the guy, he’s all covered in hair, and Rodney says, ‘That’s Jerry Garcia.’ Jerry was only a year older than me, but he was *known*. As I say, we were all still teenagers, but when Jerry was something like 15, he had played guitar on Bobby Freeman’s ‘Do You Want to Dance.’”

[An editor’s note: This irresistible historical nugget regarding the Freeman record is debated by some historians. Freeman was only a teenager when he climbed the charts with his first hit, which he had made in his native San Francisco and released in 1958. And, yes, the prodigy Garcia was indeed already playing on demos and smallish sessions at the time. But whether he can be credited with the brief solo on “Do You Want to Dance” cannot be proved. It is nonetheless a point worth making: Nelson and other music-mad kids like him *believed* it was Jerry Garcia. “You listen to that record, which was made in, like, someone’s room, and you hear it,” Nelson says. “Cardboard boxes for drums, and then a very solid guitar solo comes in. It was crude but very solid. Had to be Jerry.”]

“Anyway,” Nelson continues, “Jerry was hanging out in the

**ONCE THEY WERE SO YOUNG,**  
and Nelson, seen here in 1963, not  
long after he entered Jerry Garcia’s  
orbit, was even younger than the

others. Though he had wanted a  
regular guitar, his parents bought  
him a pedal steel. Yet it’s funny  
how important the pedal steel

would be in the career of David  
Nelson. Jerry wanted to learn the  
instrument, hence the New Riders  
of the Purple Sage.



JERRY AND DAVID WOULD BE collaborators time and again through the years; whether David was a formal member of the Grateful Dead mattered not at all—he was part of it—and formality with this band was entirely beside the point. Left: The young man and, playing the pedal steel, his slightly older mentor in 1970 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Opposite: Nelson leading the New Riders of the Purple Sage, one of the outfits he still fronts. The toughest gig was the one David played the night Jerry died in 1995 with his David Nelson Band. It was also one of the Nelson Band's best shows ever. That all makes some kind of harsh sense.

city—16, 17 years old—making a name in the local scene. He was incredibly charismatic even then. At Kepler's, he had an olive wreath in his hair. He was playing a Stella 12-string.

"And then he's sitting at a table in Kepler's, and Rodney, who knew him, comes and grabs us, Peter and me—he tells me, 'Bring your banjo'—and sits us down in front of Jerry. Jerry asked me to play a little. I did a little something. He said, 'Ah. That's very pretty.'

"Always, to me, Jerry was the most likable, the most generous man. He was always totally there, totally interested. He had a wonderful sense of humor.

"Then I saw him at the Boar's Head coffeehouse in San Carlos—the Boar's Head was like a loft at the Carlos bookstore, and things there were more like a party than a gig. Garcia played guitar. Bob Hunter was on bass. It was a trio, they were playing traditional and folk and bluegrass. They were great.

"To me, that was the start of the whole scene, and the scene led to everything. I was 18 when I graduated high school in '61. Did I expect [music] to lead to something? I never did. I never thought of writing a song. Then the scene happened, which I think was pretty much a great thing. There was a tremendous turn-on about everything. I don't think it stemmed from pot but just from an enthusiasm for life. As things started happening, everyone started thinking, *Wow, we could be a band, and go on gigs! Maybe make records!* It kind of dawned on people."

Nelson moves on a year: "It was 1962, I was at art school in Oakland, and Garcia calls. He says, 'Bring your guitar, your banjo too.' He asked me if I'd join him, and we became the Wildwood Boys—Bob [Hunter] was on bass, Jerry played banjo. We played the Monterey Folk Festival [in the spring of 1963].

"We were doing the history of American folk music. There

were three sets. First we'd do old, traditional ballads. Then music by string bands. Then the 'modern stuff,' which was bluegrass.

"As I say, the whole thing became a scene. After playing we'd go to Suzy Woods's house in Belmont, party and drink wine—a jug of *vino da tavola*. This is where a lot of blending happened, the kind of thing that all ended up in the Dead. We'd be sitting around playing songs. Part of it was definitely blues songs. And someone would say, 'Hey, remember that great old rock 'n' roll stuff?' So we'd play that. The sessions at those parties eventually wound up being part of what the bands would play onstage.

"After the Wildwood Boys, there was, for us, Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions, with Bob Weir and Pigpen. That band would evolve straight into the Warlocks and then the Dead. I went and did the New Delhi River Band, before the New Riders.

"I remember Pigpen [Ron McKernan] joining Mother McCree's Jug Champions. This kid comes in and says, 'I could play in your band. I got these jugs—which one do you like?' And he starts blowing these jugs. Jerry knew him, had played with him in an electric blues band [the Zodiacs], and so now Pigpen was in the jug band.

"He was Ron then, more than Pigpen. Jerry knew he could sing blues, and said, 'You won't believe this guy.' So he introduces this guy 'Ron.' Ron was the only way Garcia saw to a commercial band. Jerry thought of himself as a passable singer, but he was a guitarist, and many guitarists like to play behind someone. They prefer it.

"How did Ron get the nickname? Well, every day, the comic strip 'Peanuts' was a big thing in our lives—it was in the *Chronicle*, and you'd read it every day. I think it was 1962. And Sherry Huddleston, she was part of the scene, turns around to

Ron and says, ‘Oh, Pigpen!’ and he says, ‘Okay, you can call me that.’ So there it is.

“Later, when Pigpen died in 1973, Jerry thought the Dead were through.”

Nelson has casually dropped a mention of “the New Riders,” and this refers to the New Riders of the Purple Sage, which had quite a heyday in the 1970s, and a reconstituted version of which continued touring and recording for years. “Garcia talked me into singing stuff when we were doing Mother McCree’s Uptown Jug Champions,” Nelson says. “And one day my phone rings and it’s John Dawson, and he wanted to play in the jug band. He also says, ‘Hey, I went over to England.’ He had gone because of the Beatles and Stones scene. And he came back writing songs, songs the New Riders of the Purple Sage would eventually play—‘I Don’t Know You,’ ‘Garden of Eden.’ Dawson says, ‘Want to form a band?’ We hit on Garcia and he said, ‘I want to learn how to play pedal steel,’ so the New Riders were this new thing, a rock band centered around the pedal steel.

“Up at Jerry’s house in Larkspur we’d practice night after night. Mickey [Hart] agreed to play drums, and Phil [Lesh] agreed to play bass. The Dead had their records on Warner Bros. and Clive Davis got really friendly with us. We did that first album, which sold great in ’71, right out of the box. Hunter and Garcia said, ‘You’re gonna be our retirement.’”

From 1969 through 1971, the New Riders of the Purple Sage were the Dead’s regular opening act. After intermission, all of the players would take part in the Dead set, with Garcia moving from pedal steel to lead guitar. In this period, John “Marmaduke” Dawson, who would die in 2009, also of stomach cancer, and Nelson played on the sessions for such now classic Dead albums as *American Beauty* and *Workingman’s Dead*. All sorts of lines were being blurred, as lines always would be with the Dead—more a rolling, fluctuating, growing commune than a static, set-in-stone membership. Jerry’s mother ship would eventually become such a large enterprise that he had to depart the New Riders. But he would always circle around again to Nelson, who

was enlisted for the Jerry Garcia Acoustic Band in 1987 and 1988. In more recent years, Nelson has continued the gadfly tradition of his freewheeling folkie days, joining Phil Lesh & Friends for a time, and carrying on with not only the New Riders but with Moonalice and the David Nelson Band.

He was set to perform one night with that latter outfit during an Alaskan tour in 1995 when he was told the news from California. “When Jerry died, everyone just came apart,” he says. “We were stunned, but we went on. I couldn’t even think of anything. I think ‘the Force’ protected me that night. We went on, and played out of our minds.”

Recollecting all this, after what really has become quite a musical odyssey—“We’ve got kids coming to our shows, and they’re wearing New Riders T-shirts we produced 43 years ago. ‘It’s my dad’s!’ the kid will say”—Nelson is struck by what seemed so eternal back when everyone was young and the days were long, but in reality went by so fast, so fleetingly. “It’s funny,” he says. “I’ve been taking notes for maybe writing a memoir. And there were all these things back then—all these episodes and places and all these bands—that I remember as ‘eras’: this era, that era, ‘the jug band era.’ And I’m finding that all these ‘eras’ were two, three, maybe four months long at the most.”





**IN 1966, BEFORE THEY HAVE** even recorded their first album, the Dead formed a circle above **photographer Jim Marshall; that's Bob Weir in yellow, and then clockwise, Pigpen, Jerry, Phil and Bill.** At right, we see the highly technical setup that Marshall employed in order to capture this image. Different days, back then;

today, he'd have six assistants, lighting, hair and makeup (imagine the Dead with "hair and makeup"). Marshall and Herb Greene were the principal photographers who were on the ground, so to speak, in the early days of the Grateful Dead. Jim Marshall, a frequent contributor to LIFE, died in 2010.



© JIM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY LLC (2)

# Dawn and Day of the Dead

**I**t got going pretty quickly, not that anyone on the inside particularly noticed. They had the first, eponymous album in '67. Then the next year's *Anthem of the Sun* and 1969's *Aoxomoxoa* tried to blend in the live experience that, the Dead seemed to know instinctively, would be their calling card, even if "Casey Jones" and "Uncle John's Band" and "Truckin'" and "Ripple" were yet to come.

And yet still, on the game-changing *Live/Dead* album, also issued in 1969, the credits are charming, very much Amateur Hour: "Lyrics: Robert Hunter/Tunes: Jerry Garcia, Phil Lesh."

Tunes?

A "Consulting Engineer" was "Owsley," who we all know was Owsley Stanley, also known as Bear, who was active in the Bay Area as an LSD "cook" and became the Dead's energizer bunny of choice. Under "Sound" on the credits is also "Bear"—so he was minding the board as well as the supplies, it seems. Under "the Band" is "Pigpen," not Rob McKernan, and in the brief liner notes, anonymously contributed, there's this: "the Pigpen's blues rave-up, 'Turn On Your Lovelight.'"

"The Pigpen's." He was "the Pigpen"?

It seems the Dead didn't know what was going on even when it was going on.

But that's not quite right. It's more accurate to say: They seemed not to care.

"We were just interested in getting crazy," Jerry Garcia later reminisced. "We dropped out, essentially, from what would have been a normal career in music, in that whole club thing. We just said, 'This is awful; this eats it.'"

Others in the Scene disagreed. Rock critic Ben Fong-Torres writes that "there were those who were interested in more than getting crazy. Marty Balin . . . who'd been a painter, dancer and singer in a rock band and folk group, almost single-handedly created Jefferson Airplane . . . The Airplane, especially after Grace joined in late 1966, became rock royalty in San Francisco. Their

status absolutely amazed Steve Miller, who came from the blues scene in Chicago and was a hard-nosed musician.

"I couldn't understand how the Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead and Quicksilver Messenger Service were playing to people," he said, "because at that time they weren't very good bands."

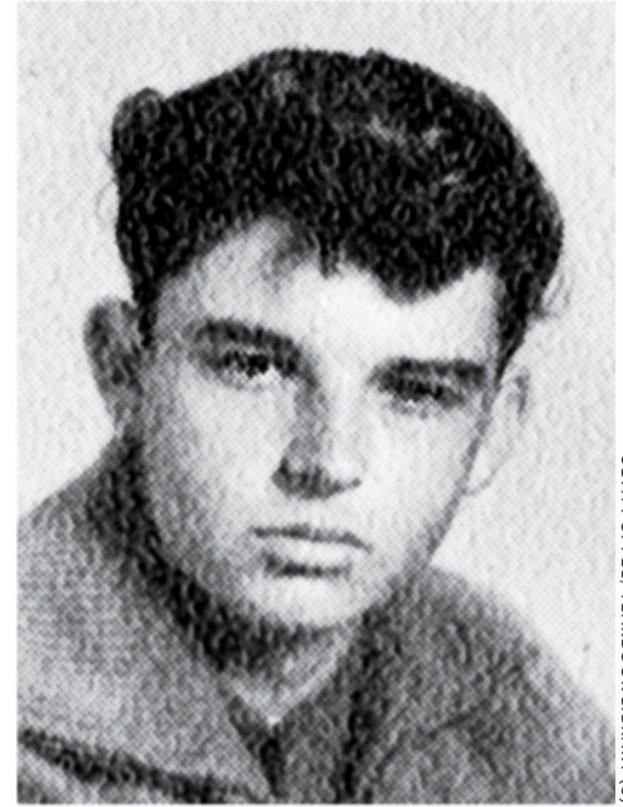
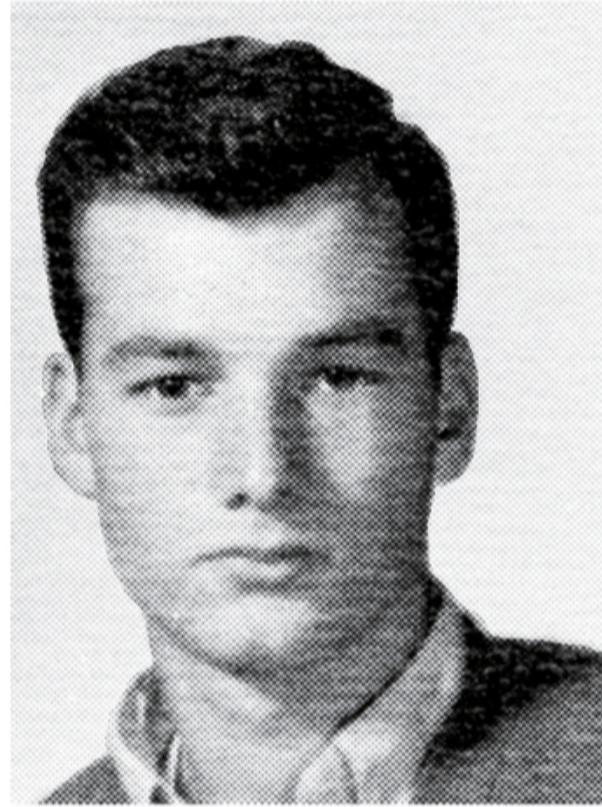
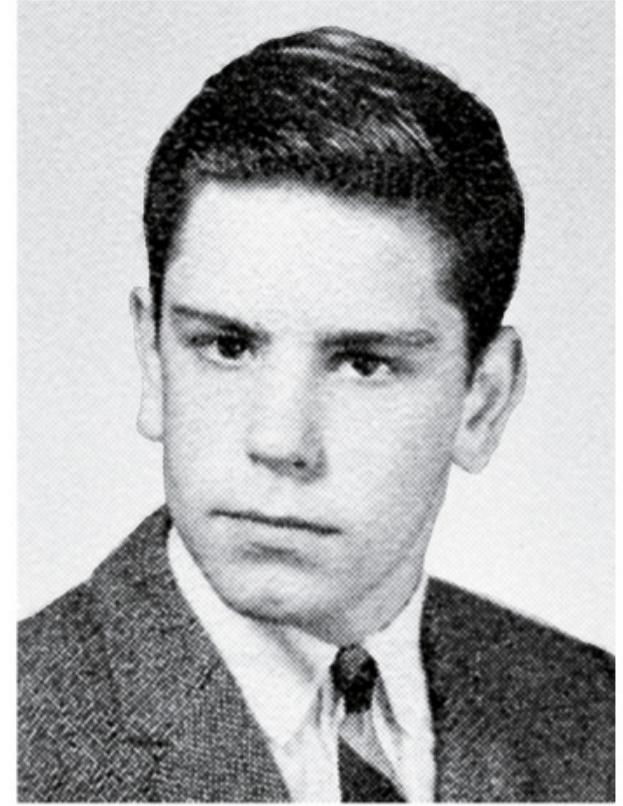
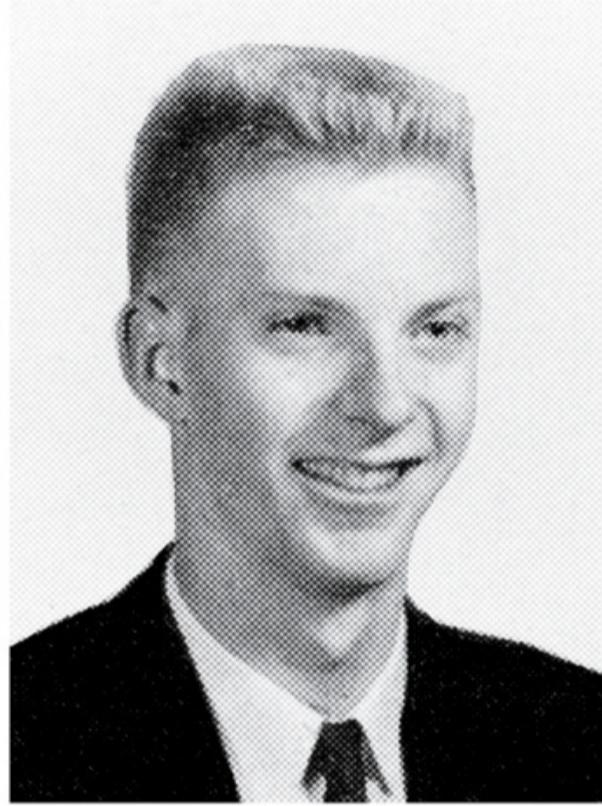
They would become better, however, and not only would the Airplane and the Steve Miller Band have hits out of San Francisco, but so would Country Joe, Quicksilver, the Sopwith Camel, Big Brother & the Holding Company and the Dead (and later, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Santana, Moby Grape, the Youngbloods, Blue Cheer and others).

With hits came the endless road and the gradual dissolution of the San Francisco scene. The Dead would go on to become the sociological—and musical—phenomenon it remains. Much of its future achievement would be secured outside the Bay Area. The liner notes would get better, more professional. Copyedited. The Pigpen would become Ron "Pigpen" McKernan.

But on that first, eponymous album in 1967 . . . there was a song. It was called "The Golden Road (to Unlimited Devotion)," lyrics and tune by Garcia/Kreutzmann/Lesh/McKernan/Weir. It's a fine song that did nothing as a single, but it captures not only the Haight of the time but also the spangled glory the Dead would one day achieve, particularly in their live shows. It also captured a spirit that these boys from the Peninsula had held in common for years, and now shared as a band. A sample of the song and the spirit:

*Well everybody's dancin' in a ring around the sun  
Nobody's finished, we ain't even begun.  
So take off your shoes, child, and take off your hat.  
Try on your wings and find out where it's at.*

*Hey hey, hey, come right away  
Come and join the party every day.*



#### ONCE THEY WERE FRESH FACED.

On this page, clockwise from the upper left, we have Jerry Garcia in 1957 as an eighth-grader at Menlo Oaks Middle School; Phil Lesh that same year as a senior at Berkeley High School; Bob Weir, a freshman at the Menlo School in 1962; Ron McKernan, not yet called Pigpen, during his junior year at Palo Alto High in 1962; and Bill Kreutzmann, also a junior and also at Palo Alto High, but in 1964. All of these schools were in the San Francisco sphere of influence.

On the opposite page we have rare pre-Dead pictures. At top left is the Wildwood Boys, a group including David Nelson, Bob Hunter and Garcia. They played, as seen here, at Jerry's wedding to Sara Ruppenthal on April 23, 1963. The lovebirds had met at Kepler's bookstore, of which we heard in Nelson's reminiscences.

Nelson was, in fact, a role player on the magical day. He remembers to LIFE's Christina Lieberman: "Yes, indeed, I was best man at the wedding of young Jerry Garcia and young Miss Sara Ruppenthal. That photo was taken at the reception, I think in an art gallery, in Palo Alto. You know it must've been a very special occasion by the fact that we are wearing suits and ties, unusual for us beatniks. I

didn't have the money to buy or rent one, so I went to my parents' house and got the suit I wore for high school graduation—perfect! Can't recall how Hunter managed to find a suit, but pretty sure Garcia rented the tux. What amazingly special times indeed! The ceremony, held at a Unitarian church, was the real traditional style. That was in April 1963. Their daughter, Heather, was born in December of that year, and I remember going to the hospital with the nervous papa to see the new baby."

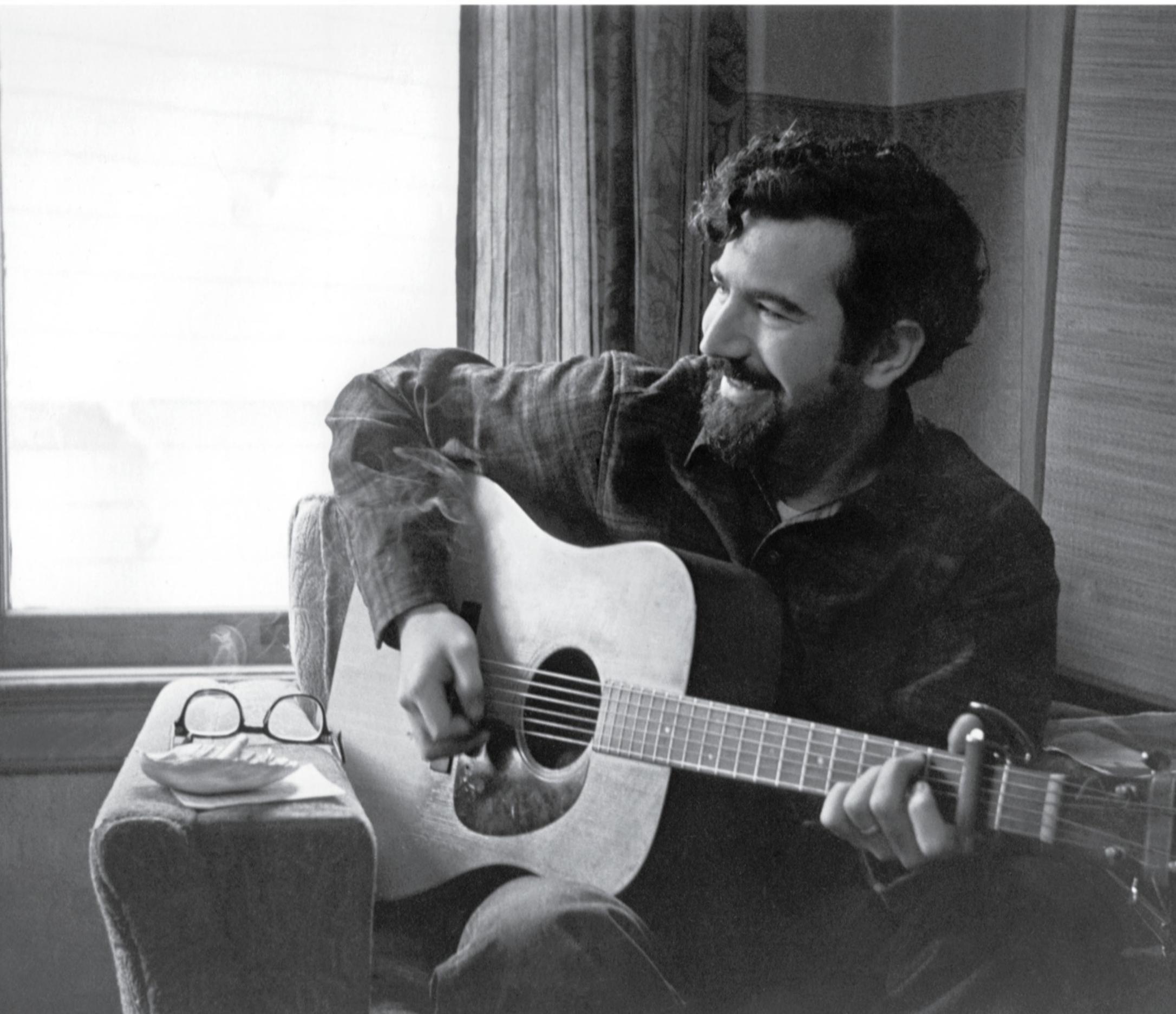
The other two photos in the top row, also rarities found for us by Nelson, show (middle) the Wildwood Boys again, at Monterey Fairgrounds on May 19, 1963 (from left: Ken Frankel on mandolin, Garcia on banjo, Hunter on bass and Nelson on

guitar). And at right, there are the Black Mountain Boys—Garcia, Hunter, Eric Thompson, Nelson and an unidentified spectator—in 1963 at, to the best of Nelson's recollection, "a place called Rancho Diablo near La Honda. That's Jerry on banjo, Eric on guitar, me on mandolin."

Opposite, bottom, is a portrait of Jerry in '63 at the house on Hamilton Street in Palo Alto where various folks—folkies—slept back in the day. This splendid photo, made by Rick Melrose, is not a product of Nelson's excavations for LIFE.

Neither the Black Mountain Boys nor the Wildwood Boys was a long-lived operation, nor was Jerry's marriage to Sara. Their daughter grew to be an accomplished violinist.

SETH POPPEL/YEARBOOK LIBRARY (5)



RICK MELROSE





**WHAT ARE NOW CALLED** by truly fanatical Deadheads the “Stanford session photos” were made by Jerry Melrose in a small room that, according to David Nelson, who was there, “was an off-campus studio, I think available to Stanford students or graduate students. It could’ve been the place where Stanford University broadcast its FM radio shows. I don’t know exactly, but I do remember there was a Stanford radio station.”

That’s just some relatively unimportant historiography for the cognoscenti. “I’m pretty sure it was Ken Frankel”—sometimes a Wildwood Boy—“who got the permission to use the studio,” says Nelson. “We were charged to be able to make a tape and we spent all afternoon recording. No idea where the tape is now, but I think we went away with something we could use as a demo. The Wildwood Boys [core: Garcia, Hunter and Nelson] had played local gigs in Palo Alto since February of that year—1963. Sometimes we had Norm van Maastricht on Dobro.”

So the personnel in these photos include, from top: a goateed Garcia and a mustachioed Hunter on stand-up bass; a peach-fuzzed Nelson strumming the bass; and Garcia on the banjo. Opposite: Garcia.



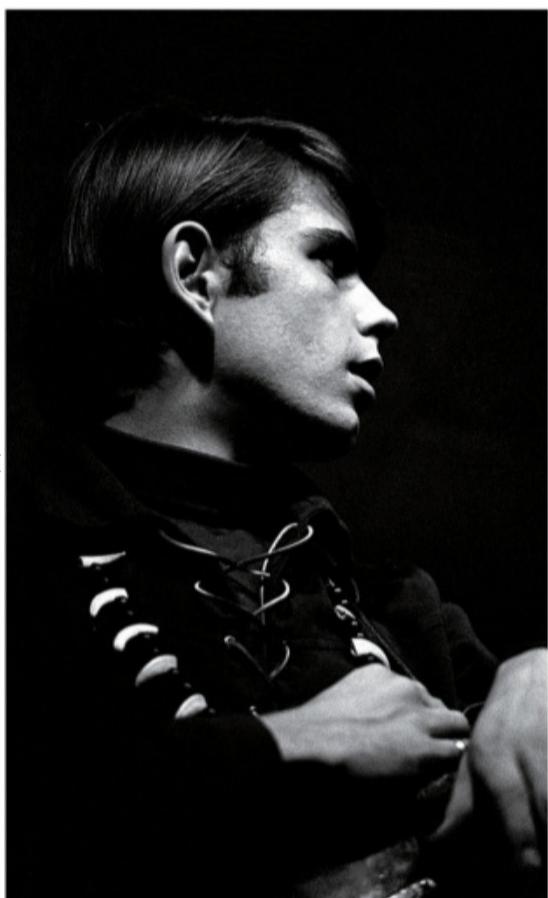
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HERB GREENE



PAUL RYAN/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY (3)

**BEFORE THEY WERE THE DEAD**, they were the Warlocks, and on the opposite page they are seen as such in 1965 in a photograph by Herb Greene. This was made when every shooter was posing bands à la the *Hard Day's Night* Beatles. Needless to say, this mop-tops-meet-the-Monkees kind of thing would be rarely replicated in the history of the Dead—a



different animal entirely. Bob Hunter has recalled that he wasn't there on the stoked evening when the band decided on its name shift, as surely he would have tried to talk them out of "the Grateful Dead." He acknowledges today that it was one of the better decisions they've ever made.

On this page, three more photos of the Warlocks. In each, they're performing in

San Francisco in 1965. The close-ups at bottom are of Bob Weir on rhythm guitar and Bill Kreutzmann on drums. Check out the ceiling tiles just above Bill's kit; that's all you have to know about the venues they were booked into. Then again, as the Warlocks, they had influential fans like Ken Kesey—so who knew what tomorrow might hold?



© JIM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY LLC (4)

**SO THEN, ONLY A YEAR** after the Warlocks' gigs seen on the previous pages, the Grateful Dead are, in 1966, playing Golden Gate Park (top). In the photo at bottom left, also in the park, are Phil and Pigpen. In the photo at bottom right, same situation, is Jerry. In the portrait opposite, Phil in '66.

Lesh, a native of Berkeley, is today 79 years old and continues to front Phil Lesh & Friends, which does not shy from playing Dead songs, and he played occasionally alongside Bob Weir in

Furthur. Once it became clear that the Dead's music wanted to stretch out, Lesh's bass playing became a crucial underpinning. He had played violin first, then trumpet, and in high school had become a devotee of free jazz. He and Dead keyboardist Tom Constanten, who was with the band from 1968 to 1970, were musical soul mates in bringing adventurous melodic lines and tastes of avant-garde classical music to the Dead's sound. It was Garcia who had recruited Lesh into the Warlocks, and

he and Jerry never looked back.

Lesh learned his new instrument, bass guitar, after joining the band. Therefore his playing was always free, unanchored from the supposition that bass was just a rhythm instrument. His inventive runs during many a jam led to the belief among some that "the Dead was Phil's band." But then, others held that it was "Pigpen's band," while most felt it was "Jerry's band."

The good news, for the music produced: Phil, Pig and Jerry didn't care.





TED STRESHINSKY/CORBIS/GETTY

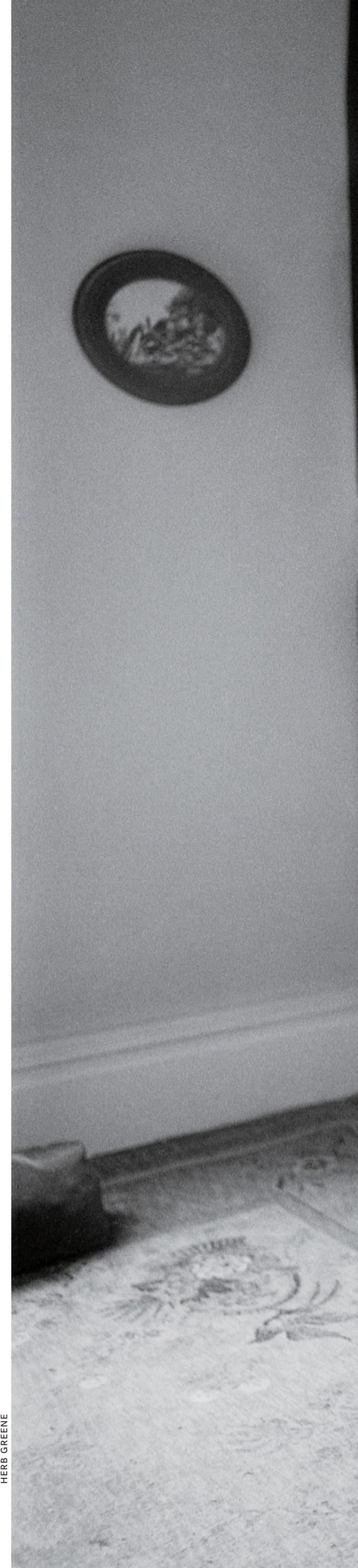
#### THE DEAD'S VIEW OF AMERICA

was both subtle and not, and often ambivalent, as the photographs on this page and the next three indicate. The American flag was not so pronounced a part of their iconography as the *Steal Your Face*—“Stealie”—logo, but it came into play early and often. The “why” seems obvious: The Dead had found their America and their American music, which they loved just as much as other folks loved their personal version of America and American music. The Dead really did seem to say: It’s all good.

Other Americans wanted to know about this, and so journalists came calling. Above, in 1966, in the light-colored suit, is the late Tom Wolfe, who would write *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, among several other modern American classics, deposing Jerry Garcia (center) and band manager Rock Scully at the photogenic corner of Haight and Ashbury in 1966. At right is Jerry, sitting for Herb Greene’s camera, also in 1966, sending whatever message he—or Herbie—is choosing to send.

The point should be made: The Dead was among the most un-ironic bands ever formed. You can’t find in Bob Hunter’s lyrics, or in others sung by the group, any kind of snarky irony at all. This wasn’t the Sex Pistols and “God Save the Queen.” This was an honest group of folks—Casey Jones was high on cocaine, so be it—straightforward and without pretense. They were happy enough to be in America and of America.

Particularly the urban part of America that was Haight-Ashbury, and the rural part of America that was Rancho Olompali, north of San Francisco, where the graceful Dead hosted a shifting guest list and could play with guns at photographer Herbie Greene’s behest (following pages). Herbie says today that the guns meant nothing at all, but simply made for a fun photo—one of the very few photos made at the Dead’s ranch. Considering that several and sundry people and their children were often hitting the pool naked, the dearth of cameras was perhaps a good thing.



HERB GREENE





HERB GREENE







MALCOLM LUBLINER / MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES / GETTY

**THE BAND WAS EXPANDING**, and in 1967 the Dead added a second (and eternal) drummer with Mickey Hart; he was looking, that year, particularly Rasputin-like (left). He would never be mistaken for Bill Kreutzmann, but still each man posted “Billy” or “Mickey” on the front of his bass drum.

Mickey, who was from Brooklyn, was different, and his addition only emphasized the Dead’s ethos of democracy. He was a student of music as much as a practitioner. He and Bill became known as “the rhythm devils,” and they were that. As the Dead evolved, their improvised music became ever more intricate and interesting. Mickey Hart, Tom Constanten and, in the core, Jerry and Phil made sure of this.

Above: Jerry, Phil, Mickey and Bob are pictured outside the band’s practice studio in the New Potrero Theatre on Potrero Hill in San Francisco, circa 1968. (A fun word with the Dead is always *circa*. *Might have been ’67; might have been ’69*. The band wasn’t paying close attention, the Deadheads weren’t yet itemizing and fact-checking, and if the photographer happened to have taken notes, well, then, history would be the happier for it.)



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**TIME TO MEET MOUNTAIN GIRL.** She was delightful, and still is. She does not go by "Mountain Girl" anymore but, usually, Mrs. Garcia—which she certainly was, even when she was Mountain Girl. She and Jerry divorced before he died, but we'll get to that very shortly.

Carolyn Elizabeth Adams was born in 1946 in Poughkeepsie, New York, and, having been expelled from high school, made her way to Palo Alto—of all places!—in 1963. There she met Neal Cassady—of all people!—who introduced her to Ken Kesey—of all! . . . well, there you go . . .

Someone in the Kesey orbit gave Adams the nickname Mountain Girl, and soon enough she was in La Honda, California, Kesey's headquarters. It seems Cassady brought her there, but so many of these nuanced facts are romantic to the extent that they seem sketchy. But while we're at it, and while we're speaking of romance: Carolyn and Kesey had a kid, named Sunshine (the Dead song "Here Comes Sunshine" may or may not have been inspired by her), and then Carolyn married another Merry Prankster, George Walker, in 1966. They separated before year's end, and at that point Carolyn took up with Jerry Garcia, whom she would eventually marry in 1981 and with whom she had two daughters.

Jerry and Mountain Girl's relationship would last until their formal divorce in 1994, and as a friendship thereafter, until his death. All of those facts were variously litigated after 1995, the year Jerry died.

On these pages, in 1967, counterclockwise from top: Mountain Girl at home; Pigpen and Sunshine; Mountain Girl and Jerry.



HERB GREENE



SHUTTERSTOCK



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**SERIOUS MATTERS** on October 5, 1967, above. The Dead are at their home base in San Francisco, protesting to reporters that they have wrongly been busted by the police for marijuana possession. From left to right are Pigpen, Bill, Phil, the band's managers Rock Scully and Danny Rifkin, Bob, Jerry, attorney Michael Stepanian and equipment manager Robert Matthews. Down the road, drug busts for rock musicians would hardly be news—every band from the Beatles and the Stones to Boy George had their day in court. But in '67, even with the free-flowing Summer of Love striking its tents, the Dead on the docket garnered attention.

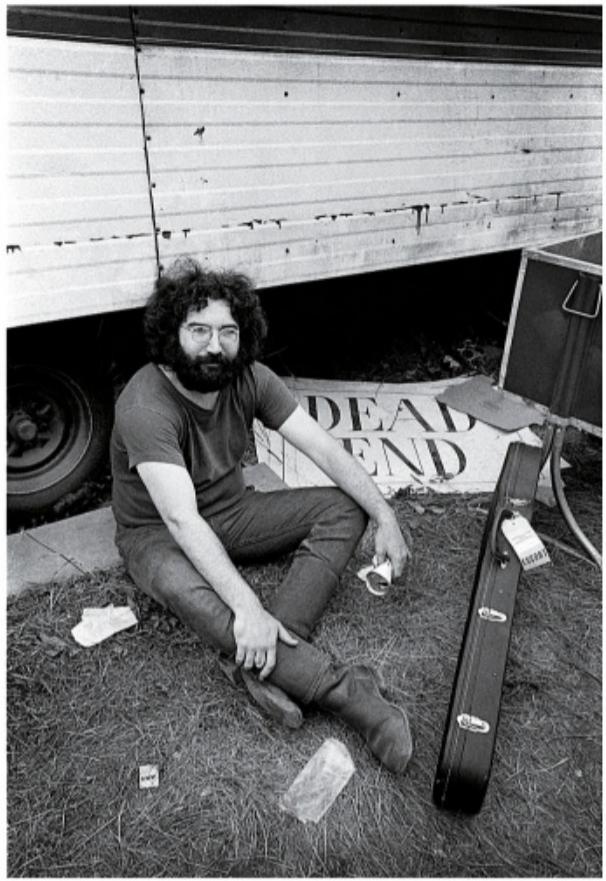
Near right: Happier days in 1967 as Jerry takes a break during the three-day Monterey Pop Festival. The Grateful Dead perform and more than hold their own. In a bizarre instance during their set, Peter Tork of the Monkees—America's top band at the time, but one that is not performing at the festival—takes to the stage and tries to keep fans from climbing aboard. He also shouts that the rumors about the Beatles being surprise guests at Monterey are unfounded.

Far right: The band in 1970, from left, Jerry, Bob, Phil, Mickey, Bill and Pigpen.



CHRIS WALTER/WIREIMAGE/GETTY





© JIM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY LLC (3)





KEN REGAN/CAMERA 5

**AS ROCK FESTS GO,** Monterey was big, Woodstock was bigger. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Jerry, in Bethel, New York (the actual site of the Music & Art Fair, in August of 1969); Pigpen in the same setting; Dead roadies at Woodstock. Above: Onstage.

Make that: Onstage *finally*. Woodstock boosted many careers—those of Richie Havens, Ten Years After and even Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, to name three. For the Grateful Dead, however, it was a holding pattern, at best. They had built a strong reputation for their live performances, but on Saturday night, the 16th, when they were due to perform, Owsley Stanley, their drug guru and sound man, determined he

needed to fix an electrical ground on the stage; the pouring rain caused concerns that the band could be literally, not just figuratively, fried. Also, the Dead's huge battery of amps and other equipment had crushed the turntable stage.

Everything got underway late, and there were frequent breaks between songs. The band performed from 10:30 p.m. to midnight, played "Turn on Your Lovelight" and departed.

If Woodstock did not represent a triumphal bow, any show back home in San Francisco in this period certainly did. On the pages immediately following, the fans fill the roadways and rooftops for a free Haight Street performance. In the Bay Area, the Dead could do no wrong.



PEACE & FREEDOM MO  
MUSSLEWHITE N  
WILMEN JOY PHOENIX







HERB GREENE

**THE DEAD**, now super successful, are turning into a cottage industry in ways other bands never had or ever would. These folks all played onstage as “the Grateful Dead” often in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but they represent an amalgam of the main band and one of Jerry’s pet projects. From left, we have David Nelson of the New Riders of the Purple Sage, Jerry, Pigpen, Bob, Mickey, John “Marmaduke” Dawson of the New Riders, Phil and Bill. Jerry plays pedal steel every night in the New Riders, then lead guitar in the Dead: a lot of work, but work he has chosen and enjoys. Phil and Mickey also pitch in with the New Riders, and David and Marmaduke then back the Dead.

The Dead are adding players to their formal lineup: Tom Constanten (1968), Keith and Donna Godchaux (1972), Brent Mydland (1979). The family is expanding. It is touching—and characteristic—that when the Grateful Dead were admitted to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994, Jerry asked that all of these players and singers be included in the citation. The band was introduced at the event by singer-songwriter and pianist Bruce Hornsby, who sat in with the group more than one hundred times.

If this evocative picture were to include everyone from Old & in the Way, Jerry’s other collaborations and all of the offshoot groups the Dead supported or fronted even before disbanding in 1995, never mind all of the post-Dead projects of the surviving members, well—that would require a very wide-angle lens indeed.



# THE WITNESS

# Herb Greene Remembers

*The Bay Area was its own island. Harbored there were folks who wanted to play bluegrass or blues, artists who wanted to paint this or that and photographers who would record it all—with no aim at history, but, rather, receptive to whatever image might emerge from the chemical bath of the darkroom.*

**G**reat photographers and journalists gravitate to great events: It's their job as well as their reason for living. Sometimes—and this is serendipity—great photographers find themselves in the midst of events that hardly seem great in the moment but that are fun and interesting and worth shooting. Millions of frames have been lost to dust because such events prove to be, at day's end, little more than fun and ephemeral—worth recording in the instant but interesting to no one down the road.

And then there are the blessed surprises.

By the time other photogs started arriving in San Francisco and opening their lenses in the 1960s, San Francisco was already happening. But earlier, when Herb Greene shot the Warlocks, there was certainly no telling that those pictures might be treasures five weeks later, never mind more than 50 years after the fact. The phrase is *in the right place at the right time*, but that tends to diminish the accomplishment and also the talent that has been brought to bear. Herbie was the *right photographer* in the right place at the right time, and his pictures will always be part of the Grateful Dead's legacy, which, as we all acknowledge today, seems destined to persevere as long as we cherish or remember rock—or any American—music.

On a calm and sunny April day in Massachusetts, where he has lived for many years, Greene sits at the kitchen table of the house he shares with his wife and casts his gaze back to the much louder, crazier, more dangerous days in California a half century ago. He was part of the art community there, and his traipsings in the city wound into the music scene, as did the traipsings of many singers and players, hangers-on, drug dealers, would-be promoters or producers, and others and sundry. This was before the record companies hit town en masse, and there was still innocence in the air.

A MEMBER OF THE TRIBE IN San Francisco in the 1960s, Herb Greene, opposite, was a fresh-faced kid with a camera. He was rooming with another young person at one point when,

removing the wallpaper in the dining room, he found the words "Happy New Year." He was going to paint over them, but his roommate beat him to the punch and added cryptic hieroglyphics to

"I got to stage manage, and I was just a kid, so that was great, it was huge fun," Greene recalls. "I remember it was San Francisco one year, Chinese New Year's, and I walked across San Francisco. San Francisco was such a great place then—you could do the whole city back then. You didn't need any money, there were two-dollar restaurants. There was an *availability* of the kind of culture we were looking for. Somewhat sophisticated, basically free, the kind of culture we were looking for. It wasn't Paris, but we had all read Henry Miller, [George Orwell's] *Down and Out in Paris and London*, all of that stuff. There were these common threads, that went back to our preteens. There was *Mad* magazine, *Word Jazz*. *The Buster Brown Show* got us all. Garcia would always be saying, 'Hiya, kids, hiya, hiya.' All those things were common in our youth, and unifying now that we were a little older."

The Peninsula scene was full of kids who were bright and inquisitive, well educated at public schools and well cared for by engaged parents. This seems strange to say, perhaps—what with the public perception of a generation of wild children careening up and down Lombard Street and overwhelming North Beach, singing "Good Morning Starshine"—but there it is. These were, by and large, smart and eager-eyed young folk. Herb Greene and many others settled into a city that was alive, active, questioning, roiling. "I had friends who went to Selma," he says, "friends who went to Vietnam. You had the music thing, which was good, and that whole drug thing, which wasn't. It was a perfect storm of things."

He found himself as a photographer, and formed independent relationships with members of the Dead—a band that didn't yet exist. "I met several of them about the same time," Greene says. "I loved Pigpen. Jerry was a friend. I'm kind of embarrassed to say it. In the very early days, yes, he was a friend. What's a friend, you

the wall. Herbie shot portraits, including the Jefferson Airplane's *Surrealistic Pillow* cover (seen on page 79), with this as a backdrop, and his wall became an emblem of San Fran psychedelia.

know? We were always glad to see each other. Phil Lesh was the first guy I got to know well, and it's always good to see him today."

The band perplexed him, as it did many at the time. The Dead, now newly formed and deeply aspirational, were doing the required things—posing for Herbie's camera, recording three-minute songs for the new release—but even from the first, this band was different.

"Everybody has preconceived notions of the Grateful Dead. I did for a long time. I didn't know what to think of them, actually. There was so much else [in San Francisco], and the Grateful Dead weren't a rock 'n' roll band. They were a jazz band, a country band, a fusion band.

"They have always covered all the bases in a way I can't even begin to understand. It's a very sophisticated, constructed music. I've been listening to symphonic music since I was a little tiny kid"—classical music is playing at low volume on the stereo during this interview—"and I have no idea what's going on over there. I just cannot follow what they're doing, but I deeply love that music. And Jerry could sing that stuff, that old-time, soulful music, in such a way... 'That Lucky Old Sun' and stuff like that. Breaks your heart. It breaks your heart."

If Phil Lesh was Greene's first friend, he found himself gravitating to Pigpen McKernan and Garcia. "Jerry, he just wanted to have new guitar strings and a nice guitar," Greene says. "He was very easygoing and sweet. He was happy to be singing backup and playing rhythm guitar, then taking a guitar line and going with it. It was Pig's band in those early days, no doubt about it."

This is when Greene fashioned several of his now iconic Grateful Dead shots, including the one of the original band at the corner of Haight and Ashbury (please see our Contents page). He was one of the many and sundry—truly sundry—guests at the Dead's rented outpost in Marin County in 1966, Rancho Olompali, that nurtured the whole idea of the Dead as a community rather than a band. The Dead's intention for the ranch, as embodied at one very special and well-remembered party, was for folks to get high, relax and make music now and again; Quicksilver came and so did the Airplane and so did Herb Greene, the one shooter who clicked.

Then Greene started to divide his time after finding work in Los Angeles—"I loved Hollywood, loved Hollywood. I got involved in the L.A. culture. I wanted to live in Hollywood and my wife didn't, so I didn't." He says, "I came back to San Francisco and did some really great work with the Pointer Sisters, Sly, some others. My studio was right across the parking lot from where the Dead were doing *American Beauty* and Jerry came over a couple of times and hung out. I'd go over there, and it was like, 'Hey, Herbie, we're making a record.'" Things were, in other words, getting more serious.

"I kind of lost track of the Dead at that time. Keith and Donna [Godchaux] were in the band. There was that cocaine scene, which was really ugly. And you didn't want to be around them.

"And then what happened? I worked with them a couple of times and went to a couple of shows, and then Jerry came down with a diabetic coma."

The decline and death of Garcia affected Greene greatly. "I was commissioned to do a set of portraits and Jerry collapsed, and when he came out of it, that was right before *In the Dark*, and Jerry came back out, and the band wasn't working and they were broke, and they put together *In the Dark*. It all seemed desperate.

"That's when I realized how much I loved him. I remember driving back across the Golden Gate Bridge and realizing, you know, he's okay—the feeling of relief, and realizing my feelings for him were pretty deep.

"He was such a lovable guy, and we were about to lose him. A lovable guy, you know, he didn't want trouble. He just wanted to have those new guitar strings and a nice guitar. He once said, 'Truth be told, that's all I need.'"

Greene continues: "Everybody has a relationship with Jerry, whether they're die-hard fans or not. When Jerry died, I had no idea of the level of our relationship. He casts a really long shadow, he embodies that... well, I think it's a myth, all that Summer of Love, flowers-in-your-hair stuff, but he seems to represent all the *good* aspects of it, some kind of role model for the Woodstock generation. The war thing, and the civil rights thing, and the free speech movement—all of that. He represents that for a huge number of people, doesn't he? Garcia, somehow, was the guiding light. The signpost for that. And I'm not sure how that happened. How did that happen?"

Maybe it was just Jerry, it is suggested: Jerry himself.

"His speaking voice," Greene says. "I miss that voice more than anything. Yeah, he was a great guitar player, but what I miss so much is his singing, his voice. He sang that stuff with such feeling. He was always talking to you.

"Garcia's such a mystery, but, you know... After Jerry died, there was this period of time, from the minute he died until, well, a couple of years later, where all these coincidences would happen. Small little things. People you would meet. People you would see who knew him. I call them miracles."

The band expired when Jerry died, of course, and the journey to the reunion concerts was a long time developing, with feints here and there and a lot of fine music made, but nothing in the name of the Grateful Dead.

"The band was afraid to go out after Jerry died," says Greene. "It took them three years before they got the Other Ones [a band begun by Bob Weir, Phil Lesh, Mickey Hart and Bruce Hornsby] out. Even years later, they never talked about Jerry much. I don't know what that was all about. When he was doing all his side projects, they didn't want him doing that stuff, because it took away from them. But you can hear it on the recordings: He was having a lot of fun doing that stuff."

"Jerry had to carry a lot of people. There were a lot of people he was responsible for."

Herb Greene's own trip moved on. "I had to stop drinking," he says. "I was a effin' wreck. I had to stop." He smiles. "I went to my first AA meeting and there's a familiar face. 'Herbie is that you?' It was Grace. Grace used to take Jerry to meetings, too. Grace, me—we were trying."

Both have succeeded, and while Grace Slick found her peace in Southern California, Greene migrated east. He transitioned from photography to gardening, though he still has his camera at hand and can effortlessly make a fine frame.



CAROLINE SULLIVAN

**TODAY IN MASSACHUSETTS,**  
Herb Greene enjoys a simpler life:  
early nights, no crowds. He and  
his wife moved from a house to  
an easier-to-manage townhouse  
six years ago. The new place,

tastefully appointed, still  
features posters and album  
covers from the San Francisco  
years, and a darkroom is being  
built downstairs. Out back,  
there is a garden.



# Death Takes a Hand

The Beatles would simply disband. The Rolling Stones are still carrying on today. The Beach Boys would persevere in factions, even as two of the Wilson brothers died. A thousand other bands would peter out, succumb to acrimony or go out of favor.

With the Grateful Dead (and, yes, now the band's name takes on a sad irony), Jerry Garcia felt, at least briefly and as David Nelson has testified, that the end had come with the death of Ron McKernan in 1973. Harsh to say, perhaps, but Jerry's feeling would have had more to do with sentiment and kinship than any appreciation of what Pigpen was still bringing to the table at that moment in time. During the Grateful Dead's rise in the late 1960s, Pig was perhaps the best singer the group had (or ever would have). And he, more than his bandmates, hadn't been pleased with the addition of musicians who were usurping roles that were formerly his. He was still singing and playing tambourine but rarely keyboards any longer. When Pigpen McKernan died, the Dead family was shaken.

They did not fold. Throughout the 1970s and then the '80s, the Grateful Dead built their unique legend. They would play for hours on end and still leave their fans wanting an hour more. Those fans coalesced in a confederation that was bound together by a dedication to following the band wherever the band might roam; an expectation that, in the full and animated parking lots, miracles—*tickets!*—might occur; and a loyalty like no other in the history of music. Deadheads would be followed by Phishheads, surely, and Bruce Springsteen's arena gigs have a parking-lot scene and acolytes in the mosh pit who know one another from many previous concerts, but the Dead invented the template, and there has never been anything like the Dead.

**RON MCKERNAN, CIRCA 1968,** opposite, and fronting the Dead at Winterland in San Francisco, in 1970, right. Pigpen taught himself blues piano when he was young. He also started drinking when he was young, and he dropped out of high school. Garcia brought him into the fold after inviting him onstage at a coffeehouse gig to play harmonica and sing some blues.

Mckernan was in the Zodiacs,

**Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions and the Warlocks with Garcia, and somewhere in 1965 he urged his bandmates to try electric instruments. To say this made a difference in the sound and future of the Warlocks—soon to be the Dead—is to vastly underestimate the case.**

**The band got spacey, and McKernan's mates started experimenting with pot and LSD, but Pigpen stuck with his Southern**

Never . . . since 1995.

That is when Jerry Garcia died, and immediately the Grateful Dead were no more. As Herbie Greene has told us, the remnants of the band were, at first, hesitant to go out collectively or even individually. The Dead had never had a leader—Garcia had resisted that role, even as he recruited new players to the outfit. But now it was apparent to all: This had been Jerry's band.

So that band called it quits, though it remained supremely popular. This retirement seemed (and was) the right thing to do. In a later chapter of this book, we will discuss the various (and many) groups that have risen from the Dead's ashes. All of this is perfectly fine to, even eagerly anticipated by, most Dead fans, though there are dissidents.

At the end of the day, the question becomes: What would Jerry have thought?

The prevailing answer seems to be: *Play on.*



LARRY HULST/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY

**Comfort—also the whiskey of choice of his former girlfriend Janis Joplin—and another American classic, Thunderbird wine. There is a long-running and contentious debate over whether the drinking killed the 27-year-old McKernan, but it surely didn't help his health or his performance.**

**Joplin of course had also died at age 27. So had Jimi Hendrix. So had Jim Morrison—and all between 1970 and 1971.**



**IN SAN FRANCISCO THERE WERE**, in the 1960s, various designated “houses”—the Dead house, the Airplane house, the Dead Ranch, the Albin brothers’ house, which was the house for the Holding Company and a lot of other folks. In the 1970s, even the tight-knit band members of these groups grew marginally more independent, but of course they continued to hang out, and above, in 1975, we have Jerry Garcia on guitar at the house of Bob Weir. On the opposite

page, top, is San Francisco über-producer Bill Graham standing outside Winterland where, in 1978, the final shows will feature the Grateful Dead and, of all acts, the Blues Brothers (yes, those Blues Brothers: the *Saturday Night Live* inventions of John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd), as well as the New Riders of the Purple Sage.

On the opposite page, bottom, performing on June 4, also in 1978, are the Grateful Dead’s Bob Weir and Donna Godchaux at Santa Barbara Stadium in

California. This returns us to two themes of this chapter: expansion and death. Donna Jean Thatcher was a backup singer for Elvis Presley and Cher, among others, and married Keith Godchaux in 1970. The next year, she introduced her husband to Jerry Garcia, and soon he was a keyboard player in the band and she was singing. Keith was at that time inspired by improvisational music, and he inspired the evolving Dead in turn; Donna added a lovely voice above a few reedy ones, as Pigpen was becoming



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ED PERLSTEIN/REDFERNS/GETTY (2)

less evident and then was gone.

As things usually went with the Dead, there was friendly flux: Jerry performed on the Godchaux's duet album in 1975, and they were part of his Jerry Garcia Band project. The Godchaux were members of the Dead throughout the decade, and are part of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame citation. Keith died in a car accident in 1980. Donna hasn't been officially part of the Dead since, but has occasionally sung with the survivors of the group.



**THE DEAD HAVE PLAYED** everywhere, and many of the individual shows are legend. If you ask Deadheads which locales are crucial to know, you'll surely hear about various Bay Area venues; Ithaca, New York; and Giza, Egypt.

This was basically bassist Phil Lesh's idea in 1978: "It sort of became my project because I was one of the first people in the band who was on the trip of playing at places of power. You know, power that's been preserved from the ancient world. The pyramids are like the obvious number one choice because no matter what anyone thinks they might be, there is definitely some kind of mojo about the pyramids." An inarguable point, surely, and so the band let Lesh negotiate with the Egyptian authorities—ultimately, all proceeds would go to the preservation of that nation's antiquities—and in September, the Dead performed on three consecutive nights in the shadow of the Sphinx and the pyramidal tombs. How cool: The third and final show was blessed by a total lunar eclipse. You really can't get more Dead than that.

The live album *Rocking the Cradle: Egypt 1978* is a very fine artifact of this strange trip,

as is the grid of passport photos of the Dead and their crew, above. At right: The 1982 version of the band's core, post Pigpen and the Godchaux, from left: Brent Mydland, Phil Lesh, Bill Kreutzmann, Bob Weir, Jerry Garcia and Mickey Hart.

Mydland essentially took over for the Godchaux with their exit and was the fourth keyboardist in the Dead's still brief history. He played with the band throughout the 1980s and wrote songs, too, collaborating with Weir's regular lyricist, John Perry Barlow; he moonlighted in Weir's band Bobby and the Midnites in the early 1980s. He died in California of a speedball overdose in 1990, and Jerry's usual lyricist, Robert Hunter, eulogized him movingly in subsequent liner notes: "The fourth major Grateful Dead era ends with the passing of Brent Mydland. The first concluded with Pigpen; the second with the departure of Keith and Donna. The third began when Brent joined and began learning the ropes and culminated with Garcia's physical collapse. The fourth era started with an unexpectedly successful comeback, integrating Brent's vocal and keyboard virtuosity. He improved the blend..."







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## DEADHEADS WERE DEDICATED

in a way no music fans—not those of Frank Sinatra or Elvis or the Beatles—had ever been. The Deadheads were part of the family. They gathered early before every concert; the transportable scene was part of the show. They hung out, they camped out, they got stoked, they got high.

Above: Deadheads amass in Laguna Seca, Monterey, California.

*I need a miracle* was a catchphrase

and banner: an ask for tickets. Miracles happened . . . or didn't—but either outcome seemed fine among Deadheads.

Opposite: Ticketless fans dance to the music in a field adjacent to the Greek Theatre amphitheater in Berkeley, California, in 1988.

Garcia perhaps best expressed the band's relationship with its fans to *Rolling Stone*. In the 1970s, they had played at the College of William and Mary in Virginia,

and at the end of the show announced they'd perform again the next day, admission three bucks. Five thousand kids showed up. Why all this? "Right now, somehow, we've ended up successes," Garcia said. "But this ain't exactly what we had in mind, 12,000-seat halls and big bucks. We're trying to redefine. We've played every conceivable venue, and it hasn't been it. What can we do that's more fun, more interesting?"





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ERIC RISBERG/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK



ROGER RESSMEYER/CORBIS/VCG/GETTY

**OLD FRIENDS WERE** always, always part of the Dead scene. Opposite, top, Bob Dylan and the Dead perform at Autzen Stadium in Eugene, Oregon, on July 24, 1987; and bottom, Jerry and Tony Bennett rehearse the National Anthem before the San Francisco Giants' opening game at Candlestick Park on April 12, 1993. Above, Joan Baez is at Jerry's home in San Rafael in 1981, with her host and Mickey Hart. Right, Bruce Hornsby playing with the band on May 12, 1991.

Garcia was famously catholic in his musical tastes. There's a wonderful interview online that first appeared in *Musician* magazine, with Jerry being asked questions by Elvis Costello. Jerry talks about his love of Buck Owens, country and western, and then the songwriting process. Costello asks him: "Do you have ambitions for any of your songs to be done by other people? 'Cause once again the whole Grateful Dead 'thing' is probably a barrier to that: You couldn't really imagine someone saying, 'I've got a great idea, let's send Frank Sinatra a Grateful Dead song!' But I can see Tony Bennett doing 'Stella Blue,' you know?"

Jerry brightens. "Oh, yeah, Tony Bennett could definitely do 'Stella Blue.' I bet he'd do a wonderful job of it. I think it's got the kind of imagery those guys are used to, you know, that smoky barroom 'Set 'em up, Joe' . . . a little of that flavor that those guys can probably get behind."

On the next page, Jerry's last concert: The Dead play at Soldier Field in Chicago, on July 9, 1995. He died a month later.



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KING OF BEERS

SOLDIER FIELD  
CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

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**JERRY GARCIA DIED** at age 53 on August 9, 1995, at a rehabilitation facility in Forest Knolls, California; cause: heart attack. Herb Greene says it was all the smokes; others cite the quantities of cocaine and heroin. He died too young, and the band properly died with him.

In an interview with David Browne published in *Rolling Stone* in 2015, Robert Hunter, who contributed our book's foreword, remembered his time with the Dead and particularly his friendship with Garcia. He recalled scuba diving off Hawaii with Jerry shortly before his death: "That was his natural habitat. He was at one with that, underwater. You ever scuba dive? There's nothing like it. One of my nicest memories was coming back

onto the boat with Jerry while we were diving and there was beautiful Hawaiian sunshine and dozens and dozens of dolphins were following us along. They were with us, not just following us. That whole underwater environment was good for him. Better than smack . . .

"He had been into rehab again, and he called me up and he was out and he was going to come over and we were going to get writing again and he said some wonderful stuff that was very uncharacteristic of him. He said, 'Your words never stuck in my throat.' Jerry didn't tend to talk like that, and there was something possibly, slightly alarming about it because he was dead within a week or so after that."

Asked by Browne if he saw Garcia's death coming, Hunter said, "I always saw it coming, but seeing it coming is not the same as seeing it. I didn't get the feeling he intended to live for very long. In fact he had said as much, at one point I can remember. He was conscious that it was not going to last forever, nor did I think he wanted it to. There are things about Jerry I just don't understand. Or maybe am not capable of knowing."

Below: Robert Hunter (left) and Mickey Hart and his son, Taro, leave St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Belvedere, California, after a private funeral service for Jerry. Opposite: Fans at a shrine at Serenity Knolls, the rehab center where Jerry suffered his fatal heart attack.



MISHA ERWITT/NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE/GETTY (2)

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THE FRIEND

# Grace Slick Remembers

*If two personalities emerged from the San Francisco scene larger than life, they were Jerry and Grace. They traveled in the same circles; they were friends. She—warmly—recalls the time in an interview with LIFE Books. Does San Francisco have a better witness?*

“I came in a bit after the Warlocks,” Grace, 79 now—and isn’t that something, Grace Slick is 79?—says shortly before the sun rises in Southern California. These days, she is up predawn and enjoys the day—as best as she can. “As Bette Davis said, growing old’s not for sissies. I’ve got diabetes. I’ve got this weird thing where I can’t fly because my feet swell up,” Grace notes.

“So when I met them they were already the Grateful Dead. At the time, you don’t think, *Oh this is gonna be noteworthy, I better remember this, it’ll be important in 50 years...* You just are kind of hanging out. I was with a group called the Great! Society when I met the Grateful Dead. I was not in Airplane yet. But all the bands, like the Charltons, the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Janis, all those people—we all played the same venues. So we saw each other on a fairly regular basis in the early days.

“It was pretty much a community. The guys would play inter-band with each other either at a folk house after [shows] or on the weekend or something. We all knew each other and we would party together. The Dead had a ranch up in Northern California and they would throw parties there. And there would be writers and musicians and, you know, local freaks like us.

“We would all shelter, for lack of a better word, ‘shelter’ each other, you know. You could stay at the Airplane house—I know people stayed there off and on for one reason or the other—stay there for a month or whatever, and the same thing went with the Dead ranch. I don’t know which one of them owned the ranch. As I said, if I had known that I would be answering these kinds of questions so many years later, I might have written it down so I’d know what I was talking about. But at the time we were all just kind of hanging out and doing what we did, making music, taking drugs, screwing each other, having a good time, because there is nothing quite as wonderful as being in your twenties in

the ’60s. There was no AIDS. Anything you got, a sexually transmitted disease, could be cured. I know because I got them. I went in the hospital for four days once, a bunch of IVs and stuff and then you get out and you’re okay.

“There’d be writers and people [at the Dead ranch], and there’d be like a barbecue going on and people taking acid and wandering around. There was a swimming pool! You could go nude or you could wear a bathing suit if you wanted to, and it didn’t matter. There were children running around. So it was this kinda pleasant free-for-all for what we called ourselves: ‘freaks.’ You know, because we were freaks compared to the straight nation.

“So, yeah, the barbecue. And we also went shooting guns. We didn’t shoot animals, we shot at, you know, those wooden barriers that police put up? *Sawhorse*—that’s what it was called. We’d shoot at those or shoot at a tree or something. But it was really stupid because we’re musicians—Quicksilver and the Grateful Dead and the Airplane—and we were deaf for about a week. So you know that’s really stupid, when you’re a musician, to deafen yourself.

“The record companies came and signed us. So we got paid basically to do what 20-year-olds like to do day to day: sex and drugs and travel. We got paid to travel. You know, wherever our manager would book us.

“And we didn’t have to change our clothes during the sets. They were lucky if we showed up. I mean, we didn’t have to have funny outfits or exploding chickens or dancing boys or any of that kind of stuff. It was just you show up, you play your music, and then you either go home or you go to another club—a club that’s open. It was just very easy. Rock ‘n’ roll is not a difficult medium. It was marvelous. All the people who say, ‘Well Janis was miserable and Garcia was miserable and Jim Morrison’—no, they weren’t.

THIS PORTRAIT WAS MADE by Herb Greene in 1966, the year Slick left the band the Great! Society to join Jefferson Airplane. Everyone was

mesmerized by this San Francisco singer whose beauty tended to distract from the fact that she could really sing. For her, at first, it was all local, and then she

sensed that it was going bigger. One day, she was hanging by the Dead’s swimming pool north of town, and the next she was with the Airplane at the airport.

"But heroin is different from alcohol. Alcohol, unless you have a car accident, alcohol is usually a slow, stupid death. When you say, I think I'll have a little more heroin, a little more could kill you. But with alcohol a little more just makes you a little drunker. And then over the years you're . . . well, you get fired from your job or your wife leaves and then your liver, and it's a slow, stupid death. Heroin is very sudden. And we were young and stupid in some ways, in a lot of ways. So you have just a little bit more, and . . . You just have a little more and it'll kill you."

Grace is asked about her relationship with the Dead—whether they were good guys—"Oh, yeah"—and whether she had a friend above others.

"I really liked, in particular, Jerry, who was interesting and interested. He knew enough to be interesting about a number of different subjects. He also painted, as I do. But that's not unusual, because it's all the same part of the brain: The arts are in the same part of the brain, so basically, if you want to you can usually jump from one to the other. [Jerry] would listen when you spoke and he would retain it. He added that to his full range of knowledge, and with that information he could make interesting or bright remarks about a number of subjects.

"I liked Jerry—I liked him as an individual better than I liked his music. I didn't mind the music. I didn't hate it or anything. I liked more power rock; that's just my taste. You know it's like some people love oysters. I don't, they nauseate me. That doesn't mean that people who eat oysters are bad, it just means I don't like oysters.

"He was a very interesting individual. A lot of those people came out of the same area. Garcia and Pigpen and Jorma [Kaukonen]—I believe some of them went to Santa Clara—and Paul Kantner. A bunch of us came from the Peninsula, Palo Alto, around there. Santa Clara, Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and they would play in the folk clubs. I don't believe there were many blues clubs around there, but there were plenty of folk clubs. So we came out of the same area, and part of the reason for the so-called explosion that happened was that we were the best-educated public school kids before or since. Do you want to be like they were in the '50s and wear a nice little apron and have it be *Leave It to Beaver*, or do you want to be like, say, the turn of the century in Paris with Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas and Diaghilev and Picasso?

"Well, what looks a lot more interesting is turn-of-the-century Paris."

Grace Slick continues: "It was way more interesting than submitting to the rather rigid social disciplines of the '50s. So we made our own kind of turn-of-the-century Paris, for lack of a better analogy. We were conscious of the fact that we wanted to be more or less free. In other words, 'totally free' means you don't have any judgment at all. We were not totally free, but we were free of clinging to the restrictions that were already set up. It just naturally happened that we decided to act on our own decisions rather than somebody else's. After about two seconds, we didn't even need to discuss it. It just was."

There were hazards to "freedom," as Slick freely admits today, and as she had already acknowledged in referring to death by heroin.

"You want to go over and read the I Ching?" 'Yeah, sure, why



not?' you know? It's kind of a 'why not' kinda thing. [What happened was] sometimes—dangerous. 'You want to go for it or not?' And we wanted to go for it."

As for the music, it was all commingling and supportive. It is doubtful that there was ever or ever will be a more mutually nurturing music community than the Bay Area circa 1961 to 1967.

"Oh yeah, there was much more of it early on because we were not so-called *discovered* yet," Slick recalls. "Once the record companies came around, it got different 'cause then you're all over the country, you don't see each other. I know for us, the Airplane, we recorded and made videos of stuff in L.A. So several months of the year we'd be in L.A., and then the rest of the time we were on the road."

"We'd get about two weeks off at Christmas, so we didn't see each other much. And then some of them died early, so you didn't see them at all."

"Ahh, in the early days everybody kind of hung out in the



BEN MARGOT/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

**GRACE PAINTS TODAY.** SHE doesn't travel much, but she is happy and as funny and ribald as ever. Here, she touches her painting of the late rock star Jimi Hendrix, who of course was at Woodstock, as was Grace. This is in 2015, during one of her rare sojourns outside Southern California, at the ArtRock Gallery in San Francisco, where an exhibition of Slick's paintings and drawings are on display.

same places—the Carousel Ballroom and Fillmore West and folk clubs and at people's ranches or houses or wherever they lived. The Dead, the Airplane and maybe the Charlatans would all be on the same bill at Fillmore West. Janis and Big Brother. We'd join each other onstage. Janis and I were both drunks. We made it easy on ourselves. We didn't use glasses. You'd just get those small bottles and keep them in your purse. It was fun, back then. The dressing rooms at the Fillmore West were kinda funky, so you'd best keep hold of your stuff. If you had a glass out or a can of something, you were liable to get it spiked, you know. That happened a lot. Ha ha ha. Those of us who knew [could] feel it coming on and you'd go, 'Oh, I left my can open around the Dead—I shouldn't have done that!' Or the Dead would say, 'I left my can open around the Airplane.'

"Communal. But that was broken up fairly fast because of the record companies. I'm not saying it was negative, that's just what happened. Sixty-three, -four, -five and even '66—I think '67, it

started getting scattered. Overnight. *Time* magazine specifically mentioned 'there's something happening in San Francisco, blah blah blah'—I forget what it was. But then the record companies started coming out 'cause they needed acts where they can put asses in the seats. They figured, 'Oh boy, there's something happening in San Francisco, so we better go check it out.' And they did. So the record companies came out and wooed Janis and the Grateful Dead and the Charlatans and the Airplane."

Grace Slick is happy looking back. She is happy with her life, happy with where she has landed. She is asked, as the conversation is winding down, to answer something of a philosophical question:

"So if you could have a 25-year-old body with the wisdom of a 79-year-old?"

"That would be fabulous."

Grace Slick pauses, then says, "But, you know, it doesn't work that way."

# More Friends of the Family

*Dedicated Deadheads can be found in all sorts of surprising people and places, folks working in the kitchen, at the drawing board, on both sides of the political divide.*

*And David Nelson, Herbie Greene and Grace Slick are hardly the only three who hung with or gigged with the band back in the day and retain good memories. Here, in conversations with LIFE's Amy Lennard Goehner and Robert Sullivan, folks who've developed their own intimate relationships with the band explain why there has never been anything like the Dead—and what that fact has meant to them.*

## NANCY PELOSI Lullaby of the Dead

Pelosi, 79, a native of Baltimore, has called San Francisco home most of her life and has represented California's 12th District in the House of Representatives for 27 years. She led the majority from 2007 to 2011, and is again Speaker of the House, making her the highest ranking female politician in U.S. history.



NANCY AND HER grandchildren share a ripple of love in 2007.

**A**s a San Franciscan, you're automatically a Grateful Dead fan. I love the music: Not only is it fun, it is excellent. It was great music—classically great music.

It's a tough competition in my family for the favorite Grateful Dead song. For myself, it's "Fire on the Mountain." "Ripple," however, has been a Pelosi family lullaby for years now. My daughter Christine has sung it to my granddaughter ever since she was three months old, and now that she's 10, my granddaughter sings it herself.

I've always said, my friend Mickey Hart isn't only a great drummer; he is a classical genius with a deep understanding of the history of percussion. On many special occasions, Mickey has played solo or brought other members of the band and their friends to perform for me. So my favorite concerts were when some of the members of the Grateful Dead came with Steve Miller to play when I became Democratic whip, and then in 2007 when they played at a celebration of my becoming Speaker of the House. It was very exciting to see our guests' joy at the music. They were simply thrilled. As you can imagine, those two concerts really stand out for me.

It would be presumptuous of me to elevate myself to the level of a true Deadhead overall. But I was definitely a "Deadhead for Dukakis" when he ran for president in '88, and I still have the button to prove it.

Naturally, Pelosi attended a reunion concert in 2015.



HERB GREENE

HERB GREENE'S PORTRAIT of the Airplane became the famous cover of *Surrealistic Pillow*. Jorma's in shades, with the horn.

## JORMA KAUKONEN Dedicated to the Real Deal

*Born in Washington, D.C., in 1940, Kaukonen cofounded a band there (with bassist Jack Casady) as a teenager. After a couple of years of college, he moved to the San Francisco Bay Area, where he played blues guitar in coffeehouses. (There's a legendary 1964 recording of him accompanying Janis Joplin when she was in town.) Founding Jefferson Airplane member Paul Kantner befriended him, and Kaukonen brought his stylings to rock music. He later formed Hot Tuna with Casady—whom he had already recruited to the Airplane—and the two continue to perform and record in that band.*

The San Francisco scene was an amazingly supportive community. Look, sure—of course musicians are ambitious. They're as ambitious as anybody. But I remember the first time I met Janis and Jerry and Pigpen—who was just a kid at the time, Pigpen—and it was just a bunch of people yakking about what it was like to be in California at the time. Happy.

This was small-town life back then. Today, it's crazy, a big city. But back then, small town.

Jerry was a sweet guy, a nice guy. Let me tell you a story. I was with the Dead up at Olompali, their place up in Marin County. They've got that swimming pool. It was the Dead's place. And Jerry and Janis and I are talking, looking at the pool. We're just talking. The blues, bluegrass—music. And one of us says, "How long is it going to be, when someday somebody says what we're doing is the real deal?" I remember that.

It's sad, of course, that Jerry died as young as he did. I can just imagine what music he'd be playing today. He cared about that timeless music so much. What I'm trying to do today is so connected to what he wanted to do back then.

I keep in touch with Grace [Slick]. I love her to pieces. It's funny: I have to text her daughter to get her to call me, and then she does. Postmodern! Bobby (Weir) shows up every now and again. He's always welcomed on my stage. About two years ago, he joined in, and we were playing. I told him, "I don't think we've ever played better together."



ED CARAEFF/MORGAN MEDIA/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY

PETER'S ON BASS and Janis is on some kind of vocals in San Francisco circa 1967.

## PETER ALBIN Lots of People Coming Through

*Born in 1944 in San Francisco, where he would grow up, the teenage Albin fancied himself a folkie in the early '60s—as did his brother Rodney and their buddy David Nelson. As a guitarist and singer, he was a founding member of Big Brother & the Holding Company, a band in close orbit with the Dead, Quicksilver and the Airplane. The band was electric and bluesy, and when Texas-based singer Janis Joplin joined, they made the album Cheap Thrills, which soared all the way to No. 1. Albin continues with Big Brother today and laments the loss of his half-century collaborator, fellow guitarist Sam Andrew, who died in 2015.*

I lived for a while in 1090 Page Street—the big Victorian. This would have been the summer of '65. My uncle Marvin basically managed the house with the help of a guy named Willie the Wizard. Rodney helped manage it, too, and collect the rents, and the money went to my uncle who was running it as part of a partnership for senior housing. There were about 25 rooms, and a lot of young people passing through all the time—college kids, musicians, artists . . . Downstairs there was a ballroom with redwood walls, and all these people from the underground scene would use it. One guy was a filmmaker and showed films, another would put on

plays—[Clifford] Odets plays—and we had amateur nights that turned into jam sessions. The guys who would become the Dead would drop over and play. Everybody knew everybody and bands just started to form. It spilled over to the concerts: At the Avalon, we would allow people to sit in with us, because we knew them. They had come by 1090 Page Street. That was part of the San Francisco scene, as you know: a lot of cross-pollination.

One night, we went to see the Warlocks at Sneaky Pete's, one of the strip clubs on Broadway. The band was on this little stage. A girl came up and started dancing. There was this air vent below the stage that would blow up when a guy hit the air, and the girl's tassels would flutter up. The men in front are yelling, "Give her the air!" After a while, it was boring, and you started listening to the band. My friend in the band was Pigpen. At the time, Ron was the star, not Garcia. Ron was a really good harp player, and people were listening to what Garcia was doing, or what Ron was doing or singing. They didn't shrink from experimenting—I think the growth of that band was very organic, expanding in stages. Our opinions were prejudiced, both for and against the Warlocks. They were doing a lot of covers, but they were good. They were very helpful to other bands. [Phil] Lesh was a trumpeter, too, and could be very helpful.

Yeah, it was fun at that time, and earlier.

Folk gigs were spare, and a lot of the times we were just passing the hat. We played because we liked the music. For me, I had kind of progressed from Kingston Trio-type stuff to more esoteric music, the [Alan] Lomax recordings and other things. I got a couple of songs from the Lomax collection. "Down on Me" came from there.

We got a chance to see Garcia at the Monterey Folk Festival—1963? He had been listening to the Kentucky Colonels and Clarence White's flat-picking bluegrass. He was playing with, I think, [Robert] Hunter and maybe [David] Nelson. That was a good appearance for them. There was a contest, either with prize money or a stack of records to the winner. Dylan was there and tried to get into one of the hoootennannies, and they told him to pay—so that was a good gig for Jerry.

Janis? I had seen Janis in '62 or '63 when she came through. She joined the band in '66. She was very close to the Dead. She knew Pigpen quite well. Well, they were boyfriend and girlfriend for a while.

But soon we were on the road and so were other bands from the underground scene, including the Dead. I remember a monthlong stay in Chicago—that was like Strangeville, we were away from our element.

Like Grace says, of course the bands saw less of each other. But we did stay in touch from afar, and a lot of us got back in touch in later years.

## SUZANNE VEGA Jerry, Sweet and Shy

*Singer-songwriter Vega, 60, hails from Santa Monica, California, and had her breakthrough in 1987 with the Top 10 hit “Luka” and had a second monster hit, “Tom’s Diner,” in 1990. Her well-received 2014 album had a title that might have applied to a good Dead song: Tales from the Realm of the Queen of Pentacles.*

I met Jerry Garcia backstage at the Ritz back in ’87. I was having a very good year; I played two nights at the Ritz, one night at Carnegie Hall and later played Radio City. So my career was on an upswing. Jerry came backstage and was quiet but radiated sweetness and a shy cheerfulness, looking down at the floor and then smiling into my eyes. It was like a schoolboy crush.

So that's how we met. Later he asked if I would come and sing at Madison Square Garden in a benefit for the rain forest. They were doing a run of shows; one was earmarked for the rain forest, with special posters by Rob Rauschenberg. Jerry said Pete Townshend and I would be special guests. This sounded great to me, and I said yes immediately. Later it turned out it was Hall & Oates, which made it a different kind of event, but I was still excited.

I met them to rehearse about a week beforehand. I was surprised at how rehearsed they were, since my impression of the band was that they did things more spontaneously and “in the moment” than I did. They gathered around me, and I think it

was Phil Lesh who said, “We just want you to be happy!”

We rehearsed “Neighborhood Girls,” which I wrote, and did a version of Robyn Hitchcock’s “Chinese Bones.” It was from an album I had been listening to, and thought the lyrics were surreal and kind of “trippy” and that the Dead would like the song, which they did.

On the night of the performance, I was surprised at how nervous Jerry seemed to be, as I had thought he was basically an easygoing sort of guy. There was an intermission and Jerry wouldn't leave the stage, but sat inside a kind of cave he had created with the amps. He seemed to want to maintain his connection with the audience.

I came on after the intermission, and I thought our performance went very well. There was one mistake. The song only had two chords; they started on one and I started on the other, but I don't remember which song it was. At any rate we adjusted. I made myself scarce after Hall & Oates came on, as their presence seemed to change the whole vibe of the show, but I believe I came on for the encore.

The backstage scene was wild and tribal—I recall tents set up with food, plants, women and babies everywhere. A gentle sort of mayhem prevailed.

I wanted to keep up my connection with them. I remember asking if they all wanted to come over for dinner, but they were constantly touring and then there were some health problems. Then “Touch of Grey” did well for them and they were never available.

I remember Jerry as being a sweet, deeply spiritual guy.



EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS/GETTY

SUZANNE IS ON GUITAR and vocals, and so, of course, is Jerry in 1988 in New York City.

## ANN COULTER How I Spent a Lot of My Time

The political commentator and writer has authored no fewer than 10 bestselling books. Her syndicated column appears nationwide.

**W**hen I was about 11 years old, my first-ever albums were *Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits* and the Grateful Dead's *Workingman's Dead*—the latter of which the whole family listened to, blaring from my oldest brother's bedroom. I still like both groups.

The Dead were very popular in my hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut, along with all the southern rock bands, bluegrass and the Band. Most people associate the Dead with hippies; I associate them with preppy lacrosse players.

I'd go to a Dead show whenever they happened to come to town but only made following the band a serious hobby for about the last seven years of their existence. After law school, I had money and no responsibilities and I happened to meet another lawyer with money and no responsibilities, so we'd fly to see the Dead multiple times a year. I once estimated that I'd been to about 67 shows, based on a complicated equation that included some fraction of the shows he'd seen.

My favorite Dead song is the last song I heard; my favorite concert was the last concert I went to; my favorite bumper sticker was "Dead for Life," and my favorite button was "Jews for Jerry." Some of my all-time favorite songs are: "Eyes of the World," "Loose Lucy," "Franklin's Tower," "Althea," "Fire on the Mountain" (especially Mickey Hart's rap version from about the time I was born), "Deal," "Sugar



COURTESY OF ANN COULTER

**COULTER is with two guys from her freshman dorm at Cornell, about to enjoy the Dead live. Deadheads will tell you the band was never better than in Ithaca.**

Magnolia," "Unbroken Chain," "Cassidy," "Uncle John's Band," "Ripple," and "Casey Jones." Some people claim other groups wrote some of these songs, but they'll always be Dead songs to me.

Tragically, the Dead never played "Pride of Cucamonga" in concert. If they had, it would have been way bigger than the aurora borealis and made the front page of the *New York Times*.

Deadheads were supposed to disdain "Alabama Getaway" and were required to go around claiming, "Phil makes the band" to demonstrate our esoteric knowledge, but I liked "Alabama Getaway." And I'm fairly certain that—no matter how great Phil is, and he is—it was Jerry who "made the band."

As time goes by, the shows I remember most are the ones I've talked about before. It must have been this way for friends of Mozart and Beethoven, too. My favorite shows, besides all of them, were the ones

in outdoor amphitheaters—Sandstone and especially Shoreline, only in part because it is built on a landfill. I had loads of Cornell Deadhead friends in San Francisco, which made those shows fun, but also they served California chardonnay at the concerts.

People unfamiliar with the Dead always think it's "ironic" for right-wingers like me to have followed the band—on long weekend breaks from the law firm—but, well, first of all: Of course we like great music! What would be odd is if right-wingers liked Justin Bieber.

Moreover, the most long-haired, tie-dyed hippies I knew were more free-market than the average Republican. One of my Dead friends in Vail made a good living making candles for Grateful Dead merchandising. He'd wake up smoking a bowl, and turn on the Rush Limbaugh radio show while making candles. (It's true: He's so far out there, he practices this weird, freaky ritual known as "commerce." Don't try telling me pot is harmless!)

But it wasn't just the rich capitalist culture among Deadheads—on vivid display in Dead parking lots before the show, tailgating for potheads. California in the 1990s was a target-rich environment for anti-government-regulation types and the San Francisco Deadheads were incredibly well versed in idiotic state laws. It was a pony-tailed hippie who explained the state's water shortage to me, saying kids had to eat off of dirty plates because California decided it was crucial to grow rice in a desert.

And, finally, there's also the fact that I live in a filthy van with a dog, a gentleman I refer to as "my old man" and our daughter, Diversity Seagull, and we make our living weaving hemp baskets.

## TUCKER CARLSON The Beat of the Drums

Tucker Carlson, 50, a native San Franciscan, is the host of *Tucker Carlson Tonight* on Fox News.

**I**went to my first concert when I was 15 in San Francisco. It was a New Year's show. I just showed up and someone gave me a ticket (in DeadSpeak, I scored a "miracle"). My 13-year-old brother was

ticketless, so he had to head home. It was the first of some 50 concerts I went to. I thought it was the most amazing thing I'd ever seen. I was struck by a couple of things. One, how improvised it was—they didn't show up with a set list. And I thought it was just great dance music, totally Americana music, not a lot of synthesizers. The lyrics, story lines, bluegrass, gospel music... And I loved the rhythm and the fact that they had two drummers. I also remember how "fragrant" the concerts were.

I love the instrumental riffs, the bridges between songs where they are noodling, the drums in space. In the parking lots were the conga drums, kind of like dancing around a campfire. There's something about drums that are universal.

There was, of course, a dysfunction in some pretty sad ways. But despite the band's problems, at its core there is a sincerity, how they'd make it up as they'd go along. I was struck by that sincerity; there was nothing cynical about the band.



NORTHFOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

**THE SENIOR SENATOR** from Vermont and his family watch from onstage as Jerry and keyboardist Vince Welnick perform at Giants Stadium in New Jersey in 1994.

## PATRICK LEAHY At His Son's Behest

Vermont native Leahy, 79, has represented his state in the U.S. Senate since 1974. He is the only Vermont Democrat to be elected to that august body in the state's history.

I've listened to the Grateful Dead for decades. Sometimes I play a few of my favorites while working alone in my office. I went to my first Grateful Dead concert when our oldest son and his friends in college invited me. I've always suspected that he thought I could get tickets easier than they could. I had a great time, I was hooked, and I went to many more.

Their music is more complex than it first seems to be. You can listen to something like "Black Muddy River" or "Casey Jones" or "Truckin'" at different times and from different concerts, and appreciate different layers that you hadn't heard before. A Grateful Dead concert is much more than the music. It's an experience, almost like being in a family of thousands of people. You can almost talk in shorthand because of so many shared understandings and experiences. Talking about a particular song leads to discussions about favorite verses, and about concerts when they performed it, and about how they performed it. I don't know of other concerts where that could happen in that same way.

I attended quite a few concerts, mostly in the Washington area. One that I wish I could have gone to was their concert in

Highgate, Vermont [at the Franklin County State Airport in 1995]. With a crowd of 100,000, Highgate instantly became the largest population center in the state. Their two shows there [an earlier one in 1994 drew 60,000] became legend. But it was in the middle of the week, and it conflicted with votes.

At one concert, I was on the stage off to the side, and I got a call from the White House operator. The state department was on the line. Sting was warming up the crowd. The secretary of state came on the line and asked if I could turn the radio down. I told him it was Sting. Silence. Sting, the rock star. Silence again. I told him I was onstage at a concert. He said, "Do you have time at your 'rock 'n' roll concert' to take a call from the President [Bill Clinton]?"

At another concert in Washington, Jerry asked me what my favorite song was. I told him, "Black Muddy River." He said they hadn't done that for a long time. They played it for the last encore. As they finished it, Jerry bowed to [my wife] Marcelle and me. The song got a huge response. Afterward, Jerry said, "We'll have to do that one again."

And they did. It was their next-to-last encore at Jerry's last concert before he died.

After the RFK concert, I brought the band to lunch at the Senate Dining Room in the Capitol. Woody Harrelson was with them. That's when they had their fabled encounter with [arch-conservative] Senator Strom Thurmond, who came over to our table to introduce himself.

Would I call myself a Deadhead? With pride.

## CARLOS SANTANA The Painterly Jerry

The Mexican native Santana, 72, formed his eponymous band in the late '60s in San Francisco; Santana (the group) along with Creedence Clearwater Revival and other acts are sometimes seen as the Bay Area's second wave. Santana (the guitarist and band leader) has so far won 10 Grammy awards and sold more than 100 million records. Santana (the group), like the Dead, is famous for its jams.

I was washing dishes in the Tick Tock in San Francisco when Jerry and the rest of the band pull up in limousines. I saw them come in and said to myself, I shouldn't be doing this anymore. I had to make a full commitment to my music. That was a turning point for me.

As I have said in the past, for me Jerry was painting outside the frame with the colors of the blues, bluegrass, rock and Chet Atkins. You could always hear a theme in his playing. Jerry was the sun, and the music the band played was like planets orbiting around him.

## KEN BURNS Playing His Song

The productions of documentary filmmaker Burns, 66, have won five Emmy awards and two Oscar nominations. Among his many epic films is the 19-hour look at America's great music, Jazz.

I was surprised and thrilled when I was invited by the Grateful Dead to attend a concert at Madison Square Garden a year before Jerry Garcia died. He told me that they tuned up before almost every gig by playing "Ashokan Farewell," the theme music from my Civil War series. We got to sit on the stage right next to them during this concert. Bob Dylan turned up, and the best part was when we were asked to go to the onstage tent between the two sets for "refreshments."

© JAY BLAKESBERG



CARLOS IS RIGHT, Jerry is center, and Bob is left during this particular guitar summit in 1987. Ace would have finished third, but he knew that going in.

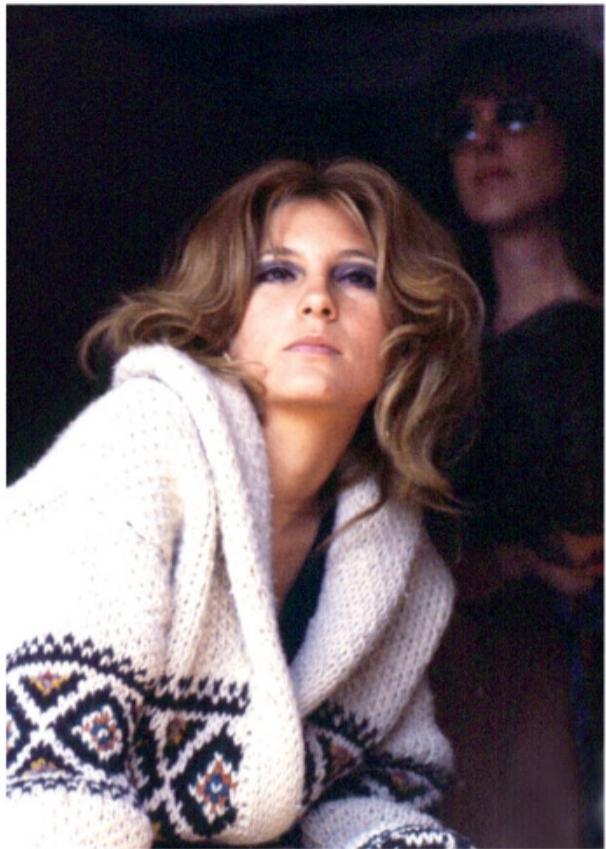
## SALLY MANN ROMANO Adventures in San Francisco and Elsewhere

Mann Romano, 70, is an attorney in her native Texas. In the 1960s, she was not a lawyer but sometimes needed lawyering-up after one of her myriad rendezvous with rockstars—an era she recently wrote about in her memoir, *The Band's With Me*.

In 1968, after several glitter-smeared years in Hollywood pursuing a serious dramatic career in elite works like *Where the Girls Are* and *Love on Haight Street* with all the ardor I could muster while staying out all night on the Sunset Strip, simultaneously exhilarated and exhausted by the demands of serial social alliances with such as Frank Zappa, Phil Spector, John Mayall, and other similarly irresistible musicians with similarly modest egos, I was persuaded to head north to San Francisco. I landed at Tiffany Mansion at 2400 Fulton Street, the new-ish residence of my former short-term L.A. lover and permanent ace boon companion, Paul Kantner, Jefferson Airplane's kamikaze rhythm guitarist. Before long, as such things were wont to go in the overripe afterglow of San Francisco's Summer of Love, Paul introduced me to Spencer Dryden, the Airplane's celluloid-ready drummer. After one afternoon with Spencer exchanging commodities of approximate commensurate value, in keeping with my history of protracted deliberation concerning affairs of the heart, I was a goner.

We two would wed—after a bit. Immediate mutual attraction notwithstanding, the course of true love never did run smooth in my case, and before I could seal the deal with Spencer, I faced the daunting challenge of sweeping up the sticky-sweet residue left behind in his heart by my predecessor, the formidable Grace Slick—an undertaking made easier by Grace's waning interest in Spencer and growing interest in Paul. Timing is everything, and, for once, mine was fortuitous.

Spencer and I were married in January 1970 at the Airplane mansion with Grace as my “maid of honor” and



ROSE MCGRATH

**SALLY IS AT THE FORE,** and her famous friend Grace recedes, in this wonderful picture taken at a free Dead concert in Golden Gate Park in 1968.

a shirtless and shoeless Citizen Kantner as Spencer's “best man.” Surely nuptial terms have never been more droll or less apt. The wedding was officiated by the sonorous Tom Donahue of KMPX and catered by Mountain Girl, the raven-haired, rosy-cheeked beloved of both Kesey and Garcia, in her inimitable culinary style, which featured refreshments as electric as they were savory. Dr. Sandor Burstein, physician to San Francisco's rock stars with pressing pharmaceutical requirements (in other words, all of them), and Jann Wenner, Grand Poobah of *Rolling Stone*, were just two of the illustrious guests who claimed to have been oddly affected by the wedding supper.

Before my induction into the Jefferson Airplane chapter of Skull and Bones, complete with hazing by Jack and Jorma and other complicated initiation rituals about which I have been sworn to secrecy, the Grateful Dead—by then ensconced on the other side of the bridge in Marin—had been on the periphery of my so-called consciousness mostly because there wasn't anyone in the group for whom I was willing to make an abject fool of myself (except maybe a pre-beard Bobby, not that Bobby had ever showed any particular interest, anyway). The gap was happily

bridged when Spencer left the Airplane and was asked by Jerry Garcia, David Nelson and Marmaduke Dawson to play drums for the New Riders of the Purple Sage, and Spencer and I moved to Sausalito.

Of course, I had met the Dead earlier. They and the Airplane were playing together once in Houston, and I was so pleased to return with this colorful entourage to my own hometown. After a few dramatic scenes at the show, we were back at the airport, and, like everything else that day, the Dead's food orders didn't turn out as planned, and when objections were made about paying, management pressed back and summoned the police. While this highly energized brouhaha was playing out before an audience of slack-jawed diners, Spencer and I were sitting at a nearby table by ourselves, heads down and minding our own, when out of the blue another HPD officer approached us, tapped me on the shoulder and told me in no uncertain terms to pull up the front of my dress, cover the rest of myself, and “start acting like a lady.” This terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day finally ended with the offending bands being escorted to a waiting United DC-6 headed out of town. Since then, I have made it a rule never to dine with, or anywhere near, the Grateful Dead in a public transportation hub more than 25 miles from San Francisco. One has to draw the line somewhere, and I'm drawing it at Walnut Creek.

Jerry. These days, in my dotage, I am always dismayed when Jerry is depicted as a one-note Captain Trips, a perennially stoned tie-dyed pied piper and patron saint of hemp-clad whirling dervishes camped out in VW buses in arena parking lots everywhere. Such one-dimensional characterizations do him and the rest of the Grateful Dead a terrible disservice, and, worse, nothing could be further from the truth. Jerry, in particular, was a gentle man and a gentleman, thoughtful, insightful and delightful to be around, and with the exception of a few real ringers (you know who I mean), this was true of my experience with the Dead's entire operation, top to bottom.

## MATT GROENING How the First Grateful Dead Album Changed My Life

Peerless cartoonist Groening—creator of *The Simpsons*, the longest-running scripted series in prime-time television—has included Grateful Dead references in several episodes of that influential show.

In 1967, the Grateful Dead imploded my short-haired teenage world.

I had just turned 13 and was feeling the shyness and desperation and awkwardness that comes from pubescence in captivity, and I found myself struggling to reconcile my attempts to be normal with the wild world I just knew was out there, full of fun and music and girls and (maybe someday) sex.

So I tried to fit in. I played softball (badly), basketball (horribly) and football (flinchingly). Along with my pals Jeff and Duncan and Tim, I was a Boy Scout, complete with shorts and neckerchief and foolish horseplay. Troop 1 met weekly in the basement of the First Methodist Church, on Jefferson Street, in Portland, Oregon. We marched around, saluted the flag and treated our elders—a couple of beefy bald guys with whistles around their necks—with the respect they so richly deserved. That meant saying “yes, sir” a lot, which does not easily roll off the tongue of the average punk hood, as my Scoutmaster called me.

My bad mood worsened the night we were loaded on a bus and dropped off at a Christian evangelical rally, where the troop had been volunteered to hand out mimeographed hymnals to the elderly. On the bus to the rally, I morosely stared out the window, when lo and behold I saw the magical words *Psychedelic Shop* on a decrepit storefront on S.W. Washington Street. Whatever the word *psychedelic* meant, this beat Jesus any day, so after a half-hour I snuck out of the rally and skulked across the Burnside Bridge and a couple miles farther to the Psychedelic Shop.

No one in the store paid attention as I gaped in awe at the walls of trippy, throbbing posters. I caught my first exotic whiff of incense, and for the last time in my life, I found it impressive. Everyone in the place had long hair and seemed to be moving in slow motion. I was especially taken by the now-iconic 1966 Stanley Mouse–designed blue-and-red-skeleton-and-roses Grateful Dead Avalon Ballroom poster.

I stepped up to the counter and asked how much the skeleton poster was, and the store fell quiet. Then the hippies started laughing.

My Boy Scout uniform was the source of their mirth, of course!

“Hey, Jake,” one of the hippies drawled to another, pointing at me. “I was in that outfit once.”

“Oh yeah?” said Jake.

“Yeah,” said the first hippie. “I was in the Army!”

Everyone in the store cracked up. Jake himself was literally slapping his knee, which is when I ran out of the store. I trudged the five miles home, cursing myself, the Boy Scouts, the world and my undeniable lameness.



JEFF MORGAN 07/ALAMY

The next day, I raced back to the Psychedelic Shop in normal boy clothes, and the hippies didn’t recognize me. After an hour perusing every object in the store, I bought the dazzling Grateful Dead poster, as well as *my very first record*. I was torn between the Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead, but didn’t have enough money to buy an album, so I ended up with the cheaper “Rag Baby,” a seven-inch EP by Country Joe & the Fish. That evening, I played the little record over and over on my tiny mono hi-fi, staring at the Grateful Dead poster I thumb-tacked next to my bed. I was in heaven.

The following morning, I grabbed my lunch money, fished through the living-room seat cushions for dropped change and scraped together enough coins to race back to the Psychedelic Shop after school to buy the Grateful Dead album. I knew nothing about the band except they had an impressive name. *Why were they grateful?* I wondered. *Because in a nuclear war you’d rather be dead?*

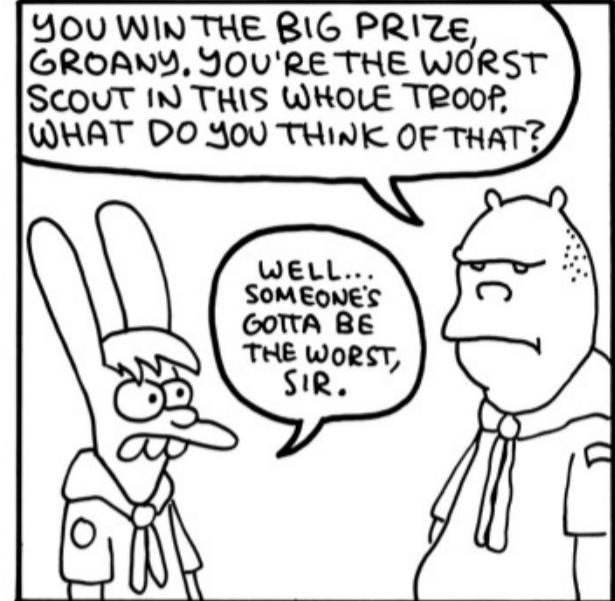
When I got back home, I dropped the needle on the record and practically floated away. Every song thrilled me, particularly “Sitting on Top of the World” and “Cream Puff War.” I was especially taken by the longest and greatest psychedelic song in the history of the universe, the 10-minute building-guitar-and-bass-and-organ frenzy of “Viola Lee Blues.” Wow! I thought. *I bet this would sound even better in stereo!*

I played the *Grateful Dead* album hundreds of times over the next year, all without the aid of drugs. Every groove and eventual scratch on that debut LP became imprinted on my brain, and although I fell in love successively with *Anthem of the Sun*, *Aoxomoxoa*, *Live/Dead*, *Workingman’s Dead*, *American Beauty*, the skull-and-roses album and *Europe ’72*, nothing will replace the immediate bliss I got from the first album.

It took me a year, but I finally realized I could not reconcile Jerry Garcia and the Boy Scouts of America. So one night, I got up my nerve and announced at dinner that I was quitting the Scouts, and the family just stared.

# LIFE IN HELL

©1995  
BY MATT  
GROENING



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"Now I suppose you're going to become a hippie," said my mom.

"No," I replied, with full snotty teenage indignation.

Yes!!! I shouted in my mind.

But it turned out that I never really became a hippie, because no matter how much I loved the Dead, I couldn't forgive the hippies for laughing at me in 1967, even though to this day, I still

wonder what kind of fool would walk into the Psychedelic Shop wearing a Boy Scout uniform.

Also, on July 26, 1972, while attending my first Grateful Dead concert at Portland's Paramount Theatre, I almost got hit in the head by a thrown wine bottle during the middle of "Dark Star." I did get spattered by the red wine from that bottle, and I'll bet a hippie threw it. Other than that, it was a primo Dead show.



# Afterlife

**O**f course, the Dead as a band never really died altogether but instead live on spiritually through contemporaries such as the Allman Brothers Band and the Dave Matthews Band and the many Dead-inspired bands that formed in the group's wake: Phish, Blues Traveler, Gov't Mule, Widespread Panic and Umphrey's McGee. The Dead had invented something too sturdy and appealing to die. The fans would never let the Dead be dead.

Still, with Jerry's passing, the band was left without its heart and head, and so Bob Weir, Phil Lesh, Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart went their separate ways. At least for a while.

Then, they started to reconstitute. The guys would front or sit in with various bands, bring in special guests, or reconvene on occasion, in whole or in part. In 1990, jazz saxophonist Brandon Marsalis memorably sat in with Phil Lesh and other Dead survivors at Nassau Coliseum, on Long Island, for a 90-minute jam that tapers treasured and swapped for years. The Other Ones, featuring Weir, Lesh and Hart, performed a few concerts in 1998, and released a live album, *The Strange Remain*, in '99. In 2000, the Other Ones were on the road again, this time with Kreutzmann but without Lesh. All four were in the band during a 2002 tour, and in 2003 and 2004 the outfit toured as "the Dead," absent the modifier. Later in the decade, the group fronted Deadheads for Obama and Change Rocks concerts, and at the decade's end Weir and Lesh formed Furthur—the misspelling purposeful, after Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters bus—which featured, among others, keyboardist Jeff Chimenti, who was with the Grateful Dead band in 2015. For fans, Furthur is perhaps closest in spirit to the original Dead, and is known for dusting

off rarely heard recordings from the Dead's catalog—some of which the Dead themselves never performed live.

More recently, Aaron and Bryce Dessner of the National curated a 59-track album, *Day of the Dead*, with covers of Dead songs by dozens of musicians, with proceeds benefiting the Red Hot Organization, a charity that raises awareness of AIDS and HIV. In the in-between times, there have been other iterations: Ace's RatDog, which played a mix of Dead tunes, rock, blues and country numbers; Phil's Phil Lesh & Friends, with its ever-changing line up; Bill's BK3; the swampy-bayou sounding 7 Walkers; and Mickey's avant-garde Mickey Hart Band. The Donna Jean Godchaux Band still performs Grateful Dead songs, too, as do outfits led by Tom Constanten.

The Dead seemed to find their satisfaction in playing night after night, long into the night. The survivors do that same thing and it seems will continue to do so for as long as they can.

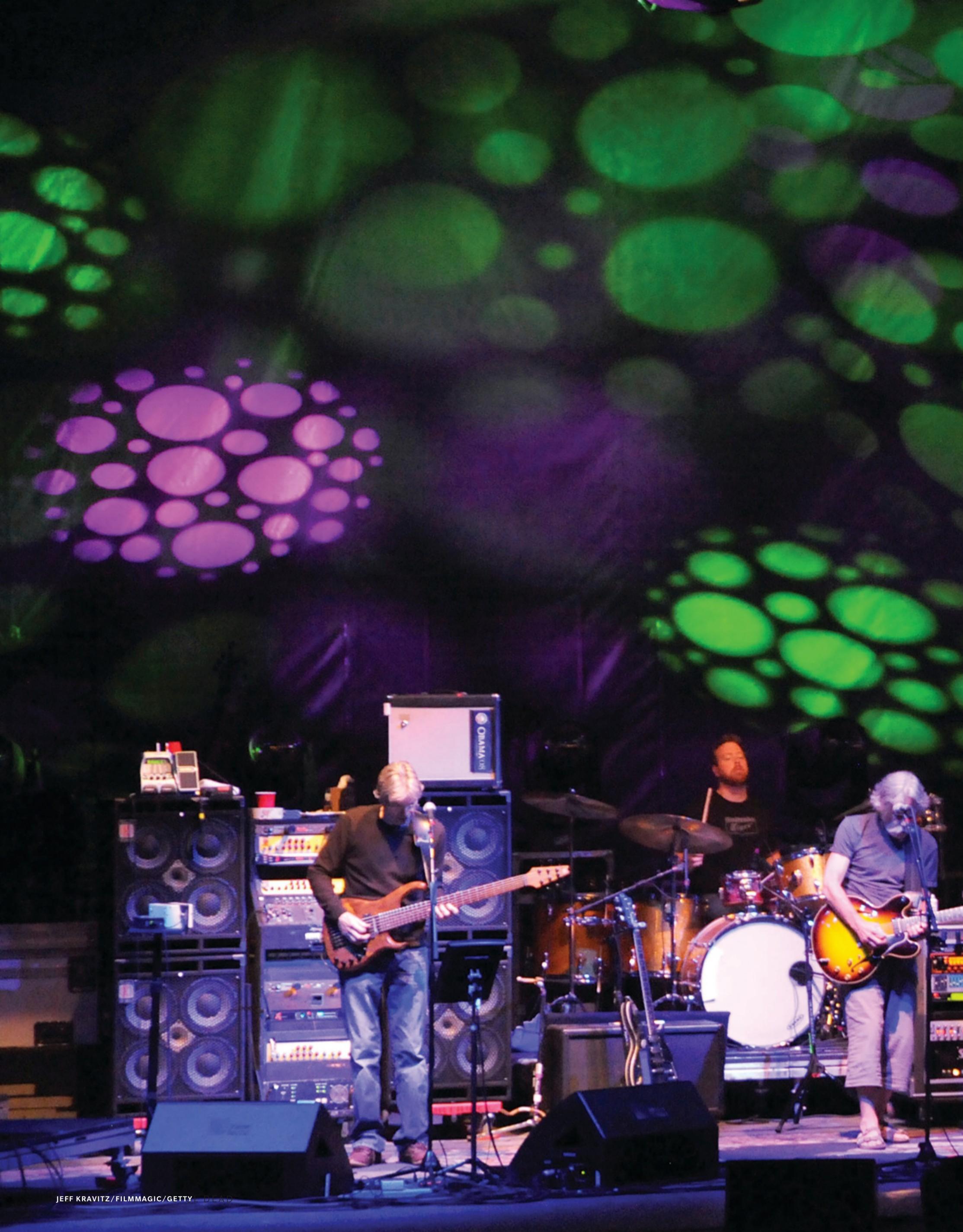


MORRY GASH/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

**DEADHEADS HAVE LOST NONE OF their enthusiasm over the years, God bless them. Opposite: Dancing with abandon on June 10, 2017, at a Dead & Company concert at Folsom Field, on the campus of the University of Colorado in Boulder. Above: On August 3, 2002, in East**

**Troy, Wisconsin, Phil Lesh, Bill Kreutzmann, Bob Weir and Mickey Hart play together, at the Alpine Valley Music Theater. There were three stages for the event, including a main stage and a spoken word stage, where a Grateful Dead historian and members of the band**

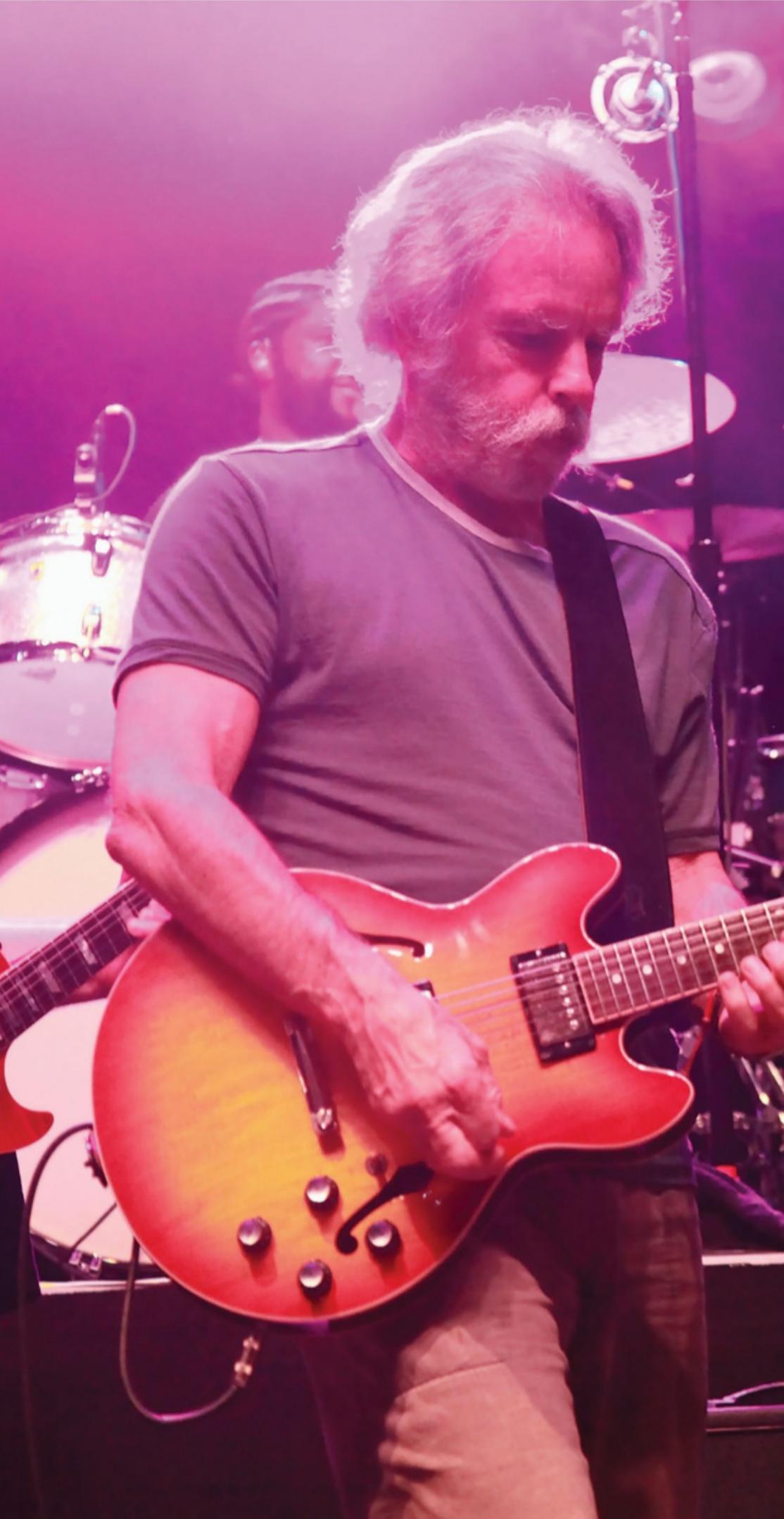
**told stories. On the next page, you'll find a photograph of the Furthur Festival on May 30, 2010, in Angels Camp, California. From left are Phil, drummer Joe Russo, Bob and guitarist John Kadlecik. The Furthur band was an on and off proposition before and also since.**



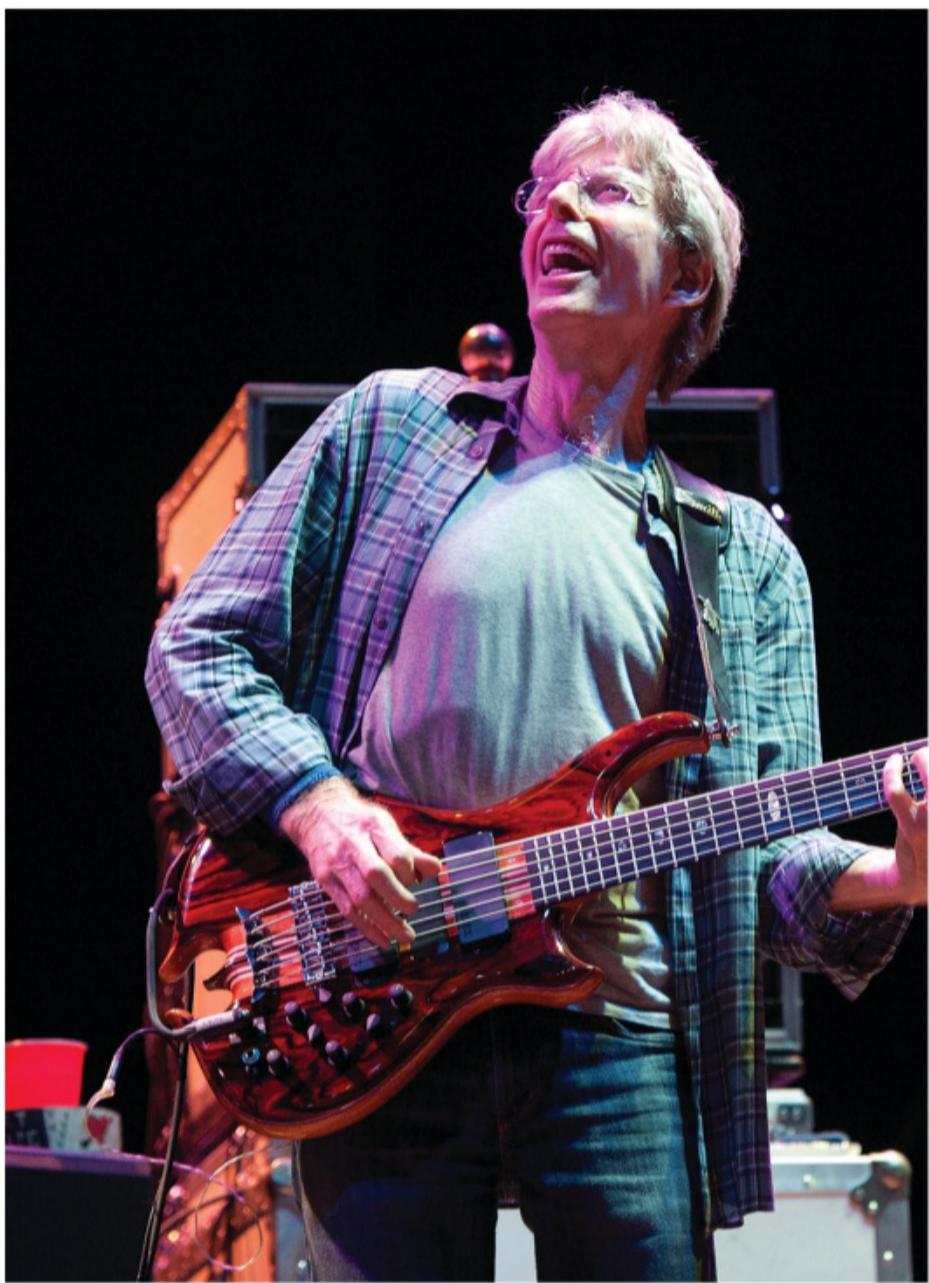




JEFF MOORE/LF/PHOTOSHOT



TAYLOR HILL/FILMMAGIC/GETTY



ERIKA GOLDRING/GETTY



ERIK KABIK



**THEY ARE EVERYWHERE**, in ever-shifting configurations. Opposite, from top: Bill Kreutzmann of the Trichromes is performing with Phil Lesh & Friends at the Ntelos Pavilion in Portsmouth, Virginia, on July 23, 2002; Phil himself is performing, also in Virginia—in Arrington—on September 5, 2004, at the Oak Ridge Farm

as part of the Lockn' Festival; and Mickey Hart is heading the Mickey Hart Band on the strip in Las Vegas on March 3, 2012.

Above, Bob Weir, ex of the Grateful Dead—remember them?—and Trey Anastasio of Phish perform at a charity benefit in Port Chester, New York, on September 7, 2012. Trey and his

bandmates have long been acknowledged acolytes of the Dead, and in 2015, Trey tried some of Jerry's lead lines and vocals when he sat in with the reformed band in Santa Clara and Chicago. For the charming third time, Trey reunited with Weir in 2017 to cover Lady Gaga's "Million Reasons," at a festival in Florida.





**IT'S REMARKABLE IN** revisiting the Grateful Dead story so many years later how many people claim not only to have liked Jerry but to have loved him and to love him still. In 2015, Mickey, Bill, Phil and Bob convened for a series of reunion concerts to honor Jerry and to mark the band's 50th anniversary. The "core four" were joined by guest musicians Trey Anastasio of Phish and keyboardists Jeff Chimenti and Bruce Hornsby, at Levi's Stadium, home of the San Francisco 49ers, in Santa Clara, California, and Soldier Field in Chicago, seen at left. By any measure, the musicians outdid themselves, and the staging was superb. (In a lovely touch, on the first night at each venue, each attendee was handed a rose). The theme was Fare Thee Well. It was an assertion—as much as any Dead thing can be an assertion—that the performances would be the end of the Grateful Dead.

Well, we'll see.



### ONE OF A KIND

*Jerry Garcia was just four years old and on vacation with his family in the Santa Cruz Mountains when he lost two thirds of the middle finger of his right hand while chopping wood with his brother, Tiff. His mother wrapped his hand in a towel and his father drove him 30 miles to the nearest hospital. As a boy, the future guitarist showed off his severed finger to friends as a source of pride.*



